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THE HOMILIST.

CONDUCTED BY THE

REV. DAVID THOMAS.

VOL. II.

"I KNOW WELL I OUGHT NOT TO HAVE ANY DESIGN FOR MYSELF, WHICH ADMITS NOT OF SUBORDINATION TO THE INTEREST AND HONOUR OF THE GREAT GOD AND MY REDEEMER, AND WHICH IS NOT ACTUALLY SO SUBORDINATED."

JOHN HOWE.

SAN FRANCISCO

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SEMINARY

THEOLOGICAL

Third Edition.

MEZZANINE

LONDON:

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PREFACE.

THE Editor feels it due to those who take this volume in their hand with the intent to purchase, to declare some of its omissions, that there may be none of the regret of disappointment after the bargain.

First. The book has *no finish*. The Editor had not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly; but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and to polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented "germs" which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

Secondly. The book has no *denominationalism*: it has no special reference to "*our* body," or to "*our* church." As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the *Homilist* to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, not as the limb of a sect.

Thirdly. The book has no *polemical theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which constitute what is called the "orthodox creed"—has, nevertheless, the deep, and ever-deepening, conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires; and that no

theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but a means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end.* Consequently, to the *heart* and *life* every biblical thought and idea should be directed. Coleridge has well said, "Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end, and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion. This was the true and first apostacy, when, in council and synod, the divine humanities of the gospel gave way to speculative systems, and religion became a science of shadows under the name of theology, or at least a bare skeleton of truth, without life or interest, alike inaccessible and unintelligible to the great body of Christians."

The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all churches who have so earnestly rallied round him, to the many who have encouraged him by their epistles, and to those especially who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the "last day" prove, my brethren, that the help you have rendered us has been worthily bestowed, and that the *Homilist* did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavours to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the everyday life of man!

DAVID THOMAS.

Loughborough Park.

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ALL the articles in the Volume were written by the Editor, with the exception of those which have their Authors' names or initials attached to them.
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A HOMILY

ON

The Historic Forms of Anti-Theism.

“The world by wisdom knew not God.”—1 COR. i. 21.

RELIGIOUS errors have a chameleon faculty of changing their appearance: they assimilate themselves to the mental characters of their patrons, and the taste and tendencies of the times. Like actors, they have habiliments to suit the audiences they address, and the parts they have to play. Hence we find the same error at one time in the coarse and scant attire of rude life and feeble intellect, and in another in the silken and flowing robes of culture, philosophy, and genius. In truth, the influence—ay, and the very existence—of error depend upon appearance. It is not but in semblance. It is a mirage in the deserts of intellect; it fascinates the vision, and raises the expectation, of the parched traveller in the distance, but dissipates into air as he approaches and looks into it. To strip it is to kill it. Take off its robes, and expose it to the daylight of reason, and it evaporates in the sun.

Of all the errors in this erring world, that to whose consideration we are going to devote this discourse seems to us the most important. It is the Beelzebub of falsehood. It strikes at the root of all morality; it reduces a man to a mere engine, and spreads a starless midnight over the future. We use the word **ANTI-THEISM** in preference to **ATHEISM**, because of its definite meaning. Atheism, literally, signifies, *without* God, and is therefore susceptible of various applications. Plato, for example, uses it in three different senses. He calls those atheists, who deny the existence of God

absolutely; those who believe in his existence, but deny his interference in human concerns; and those who believe in both, but suppose him indifferent to human crimes. Now these are very varied applications of one word, but they would all seem to admit of a rational justification. All who do not *practically* believe in God are, in truth, atheists: they are "without God in the world." But the word anti-theism we regard as designating a positive denial of the *being* of a God. In confining our attention, therefore, to anti-theism, we have nothing to do with the various theories of Deism; nor with the mental godlessness of the savage and the thoughtless; nor with the manifold atheistic notions that float about undefined and unsystematized in the societies of the vulgar and depraved; nor yet with that practical infidelity which is everywhere developed in the absence of the true religion. Our work is with certain intellectual theories, all of which are distinguished by this one fact—the exclusion from their beliefs of an *intelligent* and *personal* First Cause. We thus narrow our ground to traversable limits.

In clearing our path, we may yet premise that we are not going to canvass the merits of certain anti-theistic notions that will fall in our way as we proceed. Our work is to *show*, rather than to sift, them; to sketch their history, rather than to controvert their pretensions. In truth, as a rule, to discuss the merits of any error is to clothe it with an unnatural importance: to expose it is enough. All errors, like the monster of the "briny deep," will die if you drag them forth from their turbid element, and lift them into the sunny realms of day.

At the outset, we are met by a difficulty of classification. The varied forms of anti-theism have but little in them peculiar to *time* or *place*. The ancient and modern, the eastern and western, have much in common. The hypotheses, for example, which Anaximander, Democritus, and Strato entertained in Greece, upwards of twenty centuries ago, have appeared with but slender modifications in France, Germany, and England, in more modern times, and are, more or less, adopted by anti-theists of the present hour. Its

History, in fact, is not like the history of life, which has a native zone, and a continuity in its development, genealogically binding the last oak to the first acorn, but more like the history of meteoric bodies: they have no particular connection with any period or locality: they sweep through each hemisphere, and flash on each age.

Not being able, therefore, with logical satisfaction, to group them together according to their time or scene, we shall adopt the principle of CONGRUITY, and look at them in their relation to *each other*, rather than in their relation to any *period* or *space*. We hope to give a tolerable fair *revelation*, of them under the two following heads—their points of *resemblance* and their *points of dissimilarity*.

I. THEIR POINTS OF RESEMBLANCE. There are three features common to all the anti-theistic theories that have come under our observation—*cosmology*, *materialism*, and *eternity*.

All anti-theists are cosmologists; their varied theories are but so many hypotheses, proposed to account for the origin of the universe. Whence came this terraqueous globe, with its endless tribes of life, and forms of beauty, and unbounded treasures of sea and soil and mine?—these awful heavens, stretching away into the infinite blue, with its blazing suns and stars innumerable, and clouds laden with oceans and coursing with thunderbolts?—and this thinking soul within me, which observes and feels and reflects, which recollects the past, and trembles at the future; whence came they?—oh! whence? This prying into the *cause* of all—this questioning about the origin of the universe—is the common starting-point, we shall find, of all anti-theisms. The question itself is truly a natural one. All thoughtful men have asked it a thousand times. It rises amongst the first inquiries of opening intellect. Our great poet felt so, and represents the primal man, as he first woke into conscious life, as looking at the sublime fabric of nature within his soul, struggling with the question—

“As new waked from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid,

In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun
 Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.
 Straight toward heaven my wondering eyes I turned,
 And gazed awhile the ample sky ; till raised
 By quick, instinctive motion, up I sprung,
 As thitherward endeavouring, and upright
 Stood on my feet : about me round I saw
 Hill, dale, and shady wood, and sunny plains,
 And liquid laps of murmuring streams ; by these,
 Creatures that lived and moved, and walked, or flew ;
 Birds on the branches warbling ; all things smiled ;
 With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed.
 Myself I then perused, and limb by limb
 Surveyed, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
 With supple joints, as lively vigour led :
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause,
 Knew not ; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake ;
 My tongue obeyed, and readily could name
 Whate'er I saw. Thou sun, said I, fair light !
 And thou enlightened earth, so fresh and gay !
 Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains !
 And ye that live and move ! fair creatures, tell—
 Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus ; how here ?
 Not of myself ; by some great Maker, then,
 In goodness and in power pre-eminent :
 Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,
 From whom I have that thus I move and live,
 And feel that I am happier than I know."

All anti-theists are materialists. Cudworth, in his "Intellectual System," affirms that "all atheists are mere corporealists ;" and Hobbes declared that he "could not understand what an incorporeal God could be." The pantheists, who are only anti-theists *inferentially*, are the only exceptions to this. Matter is everything to all others : it does everything—explains everything—is everything. There is nothing but it. Even that power in the human breast which feels and reasons—whose thoughts transcend the visible, and whose aspirations burn insatiably amidst all the luxuries of earth—is but organized matter which is to wither as the flower. It came into being not by Intelligent design, not as the offspring and messenger of *mind*, but as

the effect of the blind workings of material forces. For a few days, or years at most, it is preserved, and then passes into dust again. It has no freedom—no moral character; it is moulded by the plastic hand of nature. What we poor Christians call *souls* are not agents, but tools—not persons, but limbs—not even springs, but tiny wheels—in this huge machine of earth:—straws borne on the resistless stream of laws.

All anti-theists are eternalists; they all believe in a something that has existed from eternity. All seem to feel the truth of the maxim "*Ex nihilo nihil fit.*" Indeed, mind is so constituted that it must bow to this maxim; and, therefore, the veriest anti-theists are bound to believe in eternity. They require an *entity* that has never been produced, that has no date, that is eternal. Herein they are truly theists; and what Gibbon said of Lucretius is true of every anti-theist—that "he proves a Deity in spite of himself." This eternal something, whatever designation is given it, has the attributes we ascribe to our God. To believe in an *eternal* existence is to believe in absoluteness, self-existence, independency, omnipotence, mystery of mysteries—GOD. This is the SHANGTI of the Chinese, the AMIDA of the Japanese, the JEHOVAH of the Jews, the Everlasting FATHER of the Christian.

Now, so far—as will be made evident in the sequel of our discourse—anti-theists agree; they are all *cosmogonists*, having some hypothesis to account for the universe; they are all *materialists*, resolving everything into matter; and they are all *eternalists*, holding the eternity of some existence.

Now, at this precise point on the question⁷ of eternity, anti-theists divide into two grand classes, which we shall notice under the next general branch of our subject.

II. THEIR POINTS OF DISSIMILARITY. There is one *general* point of distinction, and several *particular* ones. The general takes place, as we have intimated, on the question of the *eternity of the universe*. One class maintains that

it is eternal both in its *substance* and *forms*; that it has ever been what it is now; that although generations of trees, brutes, and men, succeed each other, yet there have always been plants, and beasts, and human beings. The river is the same through all ages, though its particles are changing every moment. There roll the Jordan and the Nile, there are the Hellespont and the Rubicon, though their waters have changed myriads of times since the days of Joshua and Pharaoh, Xerxes and Cæsar. So *man* is eternal, though men are mortal. The individuals come and go, but humanity has ever been. Candour requires us to state, that whilst we have discovered what is confessedly anomalous, persons professing to believe in a God holding this opinion,* we have not been able to find any avowed anti-theist, either of ancient or modern times, who has professed it. Our authority for believing in their existence is grounded entirely on the fact, that such theologians as Bentley and Dwight† have expended a considerable amount of their logical power in their confutation. Surely these men did not combat with the mere fantasies of their own brain. They would "not fight as one that beateth the air."

The other class—which is much the more numerous, and which, we think, comprehends all modern anti-theists—is that which holds *the eternity of the substance of matter, but not of its forms*. They regard the substratal elements as anterior to all epochs, without beginning, but the varied organizations and forms in which they have appeared as having *commencements*. How did the stupendous and symmetrical fabric of the universe arise out of these said elements? What prodigious power organized these *atoms* into countless tribes of life and beauty, moulded them into massive orbs, and brightened them into suns and stars, which confound by their number and overawe by their sub-

* Lucanus, Aristotle, Xenophanes, and even the celebrated Origen, are represented as maintaining this hypothesis. See "Universal History, from the Earliest Account of Time," vol. i., pp. 8—18.

† See "The Folly of Atheism," by R. Bentley, M.A.; also "Dwight's Theology," Sermon I., vol. i.

limity? This is the question which divides anti-theists into three more subordinate classes, amongst any of which we shall find nearly all the ancient and modern. This problem, in fact, is the fruitful source of speculative anti-theism—the root from which all its branches spring. And here we have—

I. THOSE WHO MAINTAIN THAT THE MECHANISM OF THIS UNIVERSE WAS PRODUCED BY THE FORTUITOUS ACTION OF PRE-EXISTENT ELEMENTS. Upwards of twenty-two centuries ago there was born at Abdera, in Iona, one who in very early life developed both a craving and capacity for philosophic research. He expended his property, traversed many countries, and devoted his time and powers in search of wisdom. He gathered fruits from the tree of knowledge as it grew in varied climes. He was regarded as an intellectual prodigy by his countrymen: they honoured him both for his wisdom and his worth. For him popularity had no charms. What little souls have ever courted he despised; his spirit rose superior to the empty *hosannas* of the thoughtless crowd; and hence, into lonely caverns he retired, to prosecute his studies, and to wrestle with the awful problems of being. The cosmological hypothesis of Democritus—for such was his name—was something of this sort:—The original and eternal condition of the universe was that of distinct and indivisible ATOMS. You have seen the beams of light streaming through the key-hole of a darkened room, and myriads of dusty particles dancing in the illumined roll of air. This universe, with its suns and systems, was at first in a state similar to that of those dusty particles: it was floating in isolated corpuscles through immeasurable space. These atoms, however, through eternal ages, have ever moved in parallel lines. There was no collision between them; each kept a respectful distance from its neighbour. At length, however, by pure *chance*, these atoms, in their gyrations, came in contact, and got entangled; and now commenced a prodigious confusion. There is a battling

of atoms: they strike and repel each other, and repel and strike again. It is the dark and stormy night of chaos now. In process of time, however, after innumerable evolutions and convolutions, in which they assume all imaginable shapes and combinations, by a happy contingency, they strike into this magnificent universe, with its countless forms of life and beauty.

This hypothesis, which is ascribed to Democritus, and which is considered as the most pure form of atheism, has also the names of Epicurus, Lucretius, and Leucippus associated with it.* Now, although modern anti-theists would, peradventure, ridicule the wild atomic dream of this old Greek, they nevertheless are essentially one with him in his *fundamental* idea, which is CHANCE. Chance is the Almighty in every anti-theistic hypothesis which admits a commencement of the *mechanism* of the universe: for manifestly, it must either be the development of a *plan* or not. If of a plan, then there must be an intelligent Planist—a God; but if there be no plan, then all is chance. Now, although we have intimated, at the outset, that our purpose is not discussion, but disclosure, we must, in passing, pronounce our judgment upon a dogma which offers the greatest insult, not only to all that is religious, but to all that is *rational* in human nature. I know of no vagary, in the whole history of mental absurdity, equal to that which refers the complicated, orderly, and stupendous mechanism of nature to chance. I am travelling through the streets of a great city, where splendid architecture everywhere meets my eye, and I am told that all the statues and streets arose by chance; or I am standing in a magnificent gallery of art,

* Although the atomical physiology was in use long before Democritus and Leucippus—so that they did not make it, but find it—yet these two, with their confederate atheists, were the first that ever made this physiology to be a complete and entire philosophy by itself, so as to derive the original of all things, in the whole universe, from senseless atoms, that had nothing but figure and motion, together with vacuum, and made up such a system of it, as from whence it would follow that there could not be any God—not so much as a corporeal one.”—*Cudworth*, vol. i., pp. 33, 34.

where I am enchanted with the genius that breathes in the marble and radiates from the canvas, and I am told that each statue was formed, and each picture drawn and coloured, by chance. Or yet again: "Paradise Lost" is in my hand, and I am entranced with the eternal visions mirrored to my fancy; and I am told that the various letters which compose the lofty poem entered into the various words, sentences, and paragraphs, by chance. What should I say to a man who would thus speak to me, either in that city, or in that gallery, or with that immortal volume in my hand? Why, should I not brand him either as a contemptible jester, a brainless madman, or some insolent dolt who sought to insult my reason? Yet what is that city to the architecture of the universe!—what that hall of art to the blooming landscape, and the brilliant spheres!—what that poem to those realms of imagination into which every flower introduces me, and that *spirit* of poetry which haunts the world, and sets the elements to music! Verily, I could sooner believe that chance built Rome, than that it constructed an insect's eye.*

Another class is—

II. THOSE WHO MAINTAIN THAT THE MECHANISM OF THE UNIVERSE SPRUNG FROM A GENERATIVE AFFECTION INHERENT IN MATTER. ANAXIMANDER of Miletus is the father and type of this class. THALES, his friend and tutor, had pronounced water to be the *causative* principle of all things; an idea by no means unnatural for an inquiring mind like his to entertain in a foggy age. He saw water everywhere: he observed it going up in the morning mist, and coming down in rain and dew. It seemed to be ubiquitous. If he looked into the depths of the earth, it was there; or to the heavens above, it was charioting in the clouds. He saw no life without it. The green hills and the fruitful valleys withered in its absence, and burst into luxuriance at

* See some excellent remarks on Chance in the first volume of the invaluable work of Dr. M'Culloch on the "Attributes of God," page 81.

its return. "Could anything be more naturally present to an Ionian mind than the universality of water? Had he not, from boyhood upwards, been familiar with the sea?"

"There about the beach he wandered, nourishing a youth sublime,
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of time."

When gazing abroad upon the blue expanse, hearing the mighty waters rolling evermore, and seeing the red sun, having spent its fiery energy, sink into the cool bosom of the wave, to rest there in peace, how often must he have been led to contemplate the all-embracing, all-engulfing sea, upon whose throbbing the very earth itself reposed." But however *universal* and *mighty* the water seemed, it was not sufficiently so to satisfy the more analytical and abstract mind of Anaximander as the cause of things. There must be something greater than water, thought he; something that regulates its motions, guides it in the shower, and controls it in the billows. He supposed a certain infinite *materia prima*, which was neither air, nor water, nor fire, but indifferent to everything, or a mixture of all, to be the only principle of the universe. This principle he called ARCHÉ. Hippo, Anaximenes, Diogenes of Appolonia, and others, though differing with him, as Cudworth informs us, in some trivial details, agreed in regarding matter, as devoid of understanding and life, as the first principle of all things. This form of anti-theism is called the *hylopathian*, because it refers everything to some generative affection in matter.

Now, it appears to me that this ARCHÉ of the ancient anti-theists is the same as the NATURE of the moderns. Both are an *inanimate, unintelligent, undefinable, infinite, something* in matter, the *producer* of all things. In order to see their correspondence, and, at the same time, the sublime folly of the men who deny the existence of a God, let us hear each party explaining the way in which his mysterious force originated the universe. Anaximander asserted that his

* See a "Biographical History of Philosophy," by G. H. Lewes, one of the most philosophic thinkers and vigorous writers of the present day.

ARCHÉ "made the celestial bodies, and infinite worlds, by secretion, and that generation and corruption proceeded from their moving circularly together from eternity. He also asserted that the generative principles of heat and cold being separated when this world was made, a certain sphere of fire first arose, and encompassed the air which surrounds the earth as the bark doth a tree. This being afterwards broken, and divided into smaller spherical bodies, formed the sun, moon, and stars. He held also that the first animals were generated in moisture, and encompassed with certain thorny backs, by which they were defended : which, after further growth, becoming more dry, and cracking, they issued forth, but lived only a short time : that men were at first generated in the bellies of fishes ; and being there nourished till they grew strong, and were able to support themselves, they were afterwards cast upon dry land."* And thus humanity, in its first stage, like Jonah, was tossed about in the deep, until at length the good maternal fish threw it on the dry land, and thus our ADAM was born.

This is the way in which the ancient ARCHÉ reared creation's noble superstructure. Let us now inquire, How does modern NATURE work ? I find, in a production bearing the name of Mirabeau, but said to have been written by Holbach, and which is called the "System of Nature," and generally regarded as the Bible of modern anti-theists, the following statement concerning the origin of things:—"If flour be wetted with water, and the mixture be closed up, it will be found after some little lapse of time, by the aid of a microscope, to have produced organized beings that enjoy life, of which the water and the flour were incapable. It is thus that inanimate matter can pass into life. Fermentation and putrefaction evidently produce living animals." We have neither space nor inclination for more lengthened extracts. The meaning of the writer is obviously this : that there is, in the pre-existent elements of the universe, a

* "Universal History," vol. i., p. 38.

generative affection, which he designates NATURE, like that which is found in fermenting and putrefying matter. That all life, including men, sprung out of primitive chaos as worms from corrupting dough. This is, perhaps, the most prevalent form of anti-theism in modern times;* indeed, even in the present day, I find the following language employed by one of its chief apostles:—"Why I suppose nature is equal to the performance of all things is, not because the matter has a certain form, and does not do certain things now. If the world could wait *long enough*—if time were given sufficient for the purpose—we should find that this matter would change without help on our part, and would become we know not what; because it has already become what it is from what we are not able to explain. We look at it, and call it inanimate, because it continues in a set form, and of a certain nature; but there is nothing in the world, so far as we know, that is not subject to change, and does not seem, by its own innate power, to become, at one time or other, various beings."†

The other class is—

III. THOSE WHO REFER ALL TO AN INNATE VITALITY IN THE PRE-EXISTENT ETERNITY OF THE UNIVERSE. This class is divided into three subordinate classes—*those who refer all to a vitality peculiar to every part of matter, and developing itself by chance; those who refer all to a vitality common to every part of matter, and developing itself by necessity; and those who refer all to a vitality essential to matter, and developing itself by volition.*

First. STRATO, of Lampsacus—who, about three centuries before Christ, presided, with far-famed ability, over the peripatetic school of philosophy—was the first anti-theist who held the first opinion. "He did not," says a writer,

* Diderot, Lagrange, Grim, D'Alembert, Mirabeau, Buffon, and others who contributed to the French Encyclopædia, seem to have adopted this view.

† See "Atheistic Controversy between Townley and Holyoake," of which we hope to say something in a future number of the *Homilist*.

whom we have before quoted, "fetch the original of all things, as the Democratic and Epicurean atheists, from a fortuitous motion of atoms—by means whereof he bore some slight semblance of a theist—but yet he was a downright atheist for all that, his God being no other than such a life of nature in matter as both devoid of sense and consciousness, and also multiplied together with the several parts of it; that in every particle of original matter there was the principle of life."* This STRATO speaks of the PHUSIS and the TUCHÉ as the originators of the organic universe. If we understand his notion, it is this: that the *phusis* is a principle of vitality essential to every particle of matter. It is in every atom, but more dormant and insentient than a chrysalis, and would have remained so for ever but for the *tuché*—the chance that quickened it into the expanding throbs of life. This *tuché*, like a trumpet, roused the atom-sleepers from the eternal slumbers of primeval night; or, like the breath of spring, touched the sterile deserts of chaos into a universe blooming with beauty, and redolent with the music of a new and happy life.

Second. The other class—namely, *those who refer all to a vitality common to every part of matter, and developing itself by necessity*—is far the most numerous. The idea here is, that there is ONE great parent, or stock, principle of life, unconscious and unintelligent, plantal or animal, from which all things have emanated; that the countless motions and forms in the universe are but the pulsations and evolutions of this common life, so that, in the words of Seneca, as translated by an eminent writer:—Whatsoever, from the beginning to the end of it, it can either do or suffer, it was all at first included in the nature of the whole: as in the seed is contained the whole delineation of the future man; and the embryo, or unborn infant, hath already in it the law of a beard and grey hairs—the lineaments of the whole body, and of its following age, being there disclosed, as it

* Cadworth, vol. i., pp. 148, 149.

were, in a little and obscure compendium—in like manner the original and first rudiments of the world contained in them not only the sun and moon, and courses of the stars, and the generation of animals, but also the vicissitudes of all terrestrial things; and every deluge, or inundation of water comes to pass no less by the law of the world than winter or summer doth.* Because Boethius and other stoical philosophers are supposed to have held this hypothesis, it is designated the *pseudo-stoical* atheism.

But what is this one seminal, plastic life?—this primordial, generative existent? The old stoical anti-theists would, perhaps, say, a *plantal* germ? But what say the moderns of this class? It is a MONAS. The least known and the lowest of animals in this monas: it is a mere vital corpuscle. In the primitive state of matter—in original chaos—it existed, alone. The only life that throbbed throughout immensity was this one simple atom. Though it had neither organs nor limbs, it had desires—“appetencies.” Not content with its pristine condition, it desired to advance, and advance it did. Its first stage was into a fish form, in which it generated the tribes that inhabit the waters. These marine existences, however, inherited the ambition of their first parent—were dissatisfied with their condition, and desired still to advance. Some wished to fly, and some to walk; and, by the force of their wish, the fields of air were tenanted with winged ones, and the earth with men and beasts. This sage cosmogony is modern. It is attributed to French philosophers of the last century.† Yes; and it is propounded by a writer of the present day. “The idea which I form,” says the author of “The Vestiges of Creation,” “of the progress of organic life upon the globe is, that the simplest and most primitive type—under a law, to which that of like production is subservient—gave birth to the next type above it; that this, again, produced the next higher,

* Cudworth, vol. i., p. 194.

† See Dr. McCulloch, who describes and confutes this ludicrous folly, and ascribes it to La Marck and De Maillet.—Vol. i. pp. 84, 85, &c.

and so on to the very highest. The stages in advance being, in all cases, very small—namely, from one species only to another—so that the phenomenon has always been of a simple and a modest character.” According to this fantasy, man has been journeying upwards from the lowest through all the intermediate stages of existence. He was once a fish, and the ocean was his home; and once was he a bird, winging the wide realms of air, and warbling in the groves. Be cautious, ye fishermen, butchers, and sportsmen, lest ye kill men, and, peradventure, seraphs in embryo!

The third class, in this last division, are *those who refer all to a vitality essential to matter, and developing itself by volition*. The men of this class maintain that there is but one *substance* in the universe, and that all other things are but its forms and manifestations. This substance is the “ALL,” the “ABSOLUTE.” The web is but the extension of the spider, who sits in its centre, and who, satisfied with its work, absorbs the whole into itself again. The universe is but a web brought out by the great *substance*, part of its own essence. It sits in its midst, feels its every vibration, and will one day draw it back into itself again. This figure—borrowed from the mythic dreams of the old Indian Pundits—gives as clear an expression to the idea of this class as any we have seen. Benedict Spinoza, the metaphysical sage of Amsterdam, first threw this idea into a scientific form. Descartes had defined a *substance* to be, “a thing which so exists as not to depend on anything else for its existence.”* From this definition, Spinoza maintained that there is but one *proper substance in the universe self-sustaining, universal, absolute; that thought and extension are the attributes of this substance; that matter and mind, being but properties of this substance, are identical; and that one substance cannot produce another. Hence there is nothing in the universe but this substance. This is “natura naturans;” and the universe is “natura naturata.”*

* “Sketches of Modern Philosophy,” by James Murdock, D.D.

Justice requires me to state that Spinozism is not anti-theistic in the same sense as the other hypotheses that have passed under our review. There is, as far as the intention of its author is concerned, a mighty gulf between it and them. Albeit, *inferentially*, Spinozism is anti-theism. I can see no more of the God which my reason pictures and my heart demands—"the *living* God," for which my soul cries out—in the SUBSTANCE of the Amsterdam Jew, than I can in the *chance* of Democritus, the *arché* of Anaximander, the *nature* of Holbach, or the *monas* of La Marek.*

We have thus given, in the *briefest* manner, a sketch of all the known forms of the monstrous error in question. We have seen certain points in which they all agree, and the great points on which they differ. The two great divisions are ABSOLUTE ETERNALISM, or the ascribing of eternity both to the substance and forms of the universe; and PARTIAL ETERNALISM, or ascribing eternity to the substance, and a commencement to the forms. We have seen that the latter division includes the *atomic*—those who maintain that the mechanism of the universe was produced by the fortuitous action of pre-existent elements; the *hylopathian*—those who maintain that the mechanism of the universe sprang from a generative affection inherent in matter; the *hylozoic*—those who maintain that the mechanism of the universe sprang from an innate vitality in the pre-existent elements. This last class divides itself again into three minor branches—those who refer all to a vitality *peculiar* to every part of matter, and developing itself by *chance*; those who refer all to a vitality *common* to every part of matter, and developing itself by *necessity*; and those who refer all to a vitality essential to every part of matter, and developing itself by *volition*.

We must adjourn comments on this multiform anti-theism until our next number.

* See a masterly article on Speculative Philosophy in the "Bibliotheca Sacra" for April, 1851, which discusses the theories of Spinoza, Leibnitz, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, &c., &c.

Germ of Thought.

Analysis of Homily the Thirty-fifth.

“ Can the rush grow up without mire ? can the flag grow without water ? Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb. So are the paths of all that forget God ; and the hypocrite’s hope shall perish,” &c.—JOB viii. 11—16.

SUBJECT :—*False Life.*

THE most generic idea we have of life is, that it is a principle of action. In neither the vegetable nor the animal kingdoms do we know more of this principle than that it defies gravitation, and appropriates surrounding elements to its own nourishment. But the principles of spiritual life—the life of all intelligences—we understand as a matter of consciousness. *The controlling disposition is the life of soul.* All things are seen and felt through the governing propensity. All this is, so the universe is. It moves and moulds the entire spirit. It is, in Scripture language, the “ heart ” of the man. There are two, and but two, great presiding dispositions—selfishness and love. The former is the basis of all that is sinful and false in life, and the latter of all that is holy and true. As these two are to be found amongst men, we have here false lives as well as true ; and it is the former the text brings to our notice, and strikingly illustrates. It suggests three facts in relation to the *false life of man* :—

I. THAT ITS EXISTENCE IS FRAIL. It is here represented by the “ rush or the flag,”—*i.e.*, a species of marsh weed. This figure presents two ideas illustrating its frailty :—(1) *That it lacks solidity.* You have seen plants of this kind. You have observed their spongy texture. You can bend them with the greatest ease. They offer no resistance. Unlike the tree which defies outward forces, they yield to the slightest touch, and bend to the softest breeze. So it is

with men whose dispositions are not in unison with truth rectitude, and God. Their characters are not of a firm oaken texture, but loose and weed-like. They are rushes, not cedars. They are reeds shaken with the wind, houses upon the slipping sand. In a sense, not righteous, they become "all things to all men." They will jest with the scorner, and sing with the saint. There are two philosophical facts which show that this must be the fact so long as selfishness controls:—First. That there can be no *true* energy of character where there is not a concentration of all the powers of the soul. Some minds are kingdoms divided against themselves: one faculty is warring against another; their energy is exhausted on intestine battles, and they "cannot stand" before an outward foe; and, secondly, that nothing but the disposition of supreme love to God can ensure this concentration. Conscience, the mightiest and divinest force, stands out in unyielding hostility against every other disposition. Hence, all false life, or all men under the control of selfish dispositions, lack solidity. (2) The figure suggests *that it lacks constancy*. It cannot grow without water. Many plants live and thrive in all weathers and seasons, but this water reed or rush will droop and die, whatever be the season, if the water be dried up from about its roots. Whilst it is yet in its greenness, and not cut down, it withers before any other herb. So it is with all false life: it can only continue in certain seasons. When everything without is favourable—when no temptation is presented, no sacrifice required for principle—then it will appear strong. It is like the rush that grew in the channel of the Nile, it flourishes in the seasons when the river of favourable circumstances flows full up to its banks, and dies when it subsides; and not like those noble trees that grew on Egypt's hills whether the Nile rolled on or not. Who does not see this kind of false life everywhere—yes, even in connexion with religion? Alas! the majority of those who call themselves Christians, resemble more the loose, oscillating rush, than the firm and unbending tree. Nor can the

souls of men ever be *morally* strong, until they get inspired with that new disposition which was inculcated in the teaching and exemplified in the life of Jesus.

II. ITS COURSE IS SINFUL. "So are the paths of all that forget God." Whatever they do—however apparently devout—however liberal in their contributions, or zealous in their efforts—if they forget God, this vitiates everything. Where the Almighty is not the *reason*, the *will*, and the *end* of action, there can be no virtue. The fact is, unless a man possesses paramount love to God, which is the only true life, in the nature of the case he will be, more or less, *unmindful* of him, and never be properly influenced by the remembrance of his name. (1) *He will always be ruled more by a desire to gratify himself than to please God.* His own pleasure, profit, and aggrandisement will engross more of his mind and time than the claims of his Maker. He will be so full of self as to have no room in his heart for God. When the idea of God crosses his mind, it will be only to awaken his hate or dread, not to stimulate him by an all-consecrating love. It will come as an unwelcome visitant, which he will struggle immediately to expel, rather than as a loved friend that he will seek to entertain. (2) *He will be always more solicitous for the approbation of men than of God.* Like the Pharisees, he will "love to be seen of men." Public opinion will be his law. He will be influenced more by the consideration of what men will think than what God requires. He will ever be the reflection and the slave of the popular opinions of his age. In religion or in politics he will seek to be what men will approve rather than what God demands. He seeks the "honour that cometh from men rather than the honour that cometh from God only." Is not this life prevalent amongst us? Where, in our markets, in our senate-house, or in our churches, are the men who are influenced by this loving remembrance of the great God?—men who, like Enoch, walked with God, or, like David, set the Lord always before them? Verily—without being un-

charitable—we are a generation of moral infidels. Though intellectually holding the doctrine that there is a God, and condemning the atheist, we are practically without God. The charge which the Lord made of old against the Israelites to the prophets is applicable to us:—"They sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness."

Now, we have to show that this forgetfulness of God is a sin. (1) *It is contrary to our spiritual constitution.* There are three things in man's constitution:—*A tendency to look to God.* Man everywhere develops this. *A faculty to remember what you discover in God.* The function of memory is to gather up ideas of God, and place them as orbs to illuminate the world within. *A susceptibility to be influenced by these ideas.* Oh! these souls of ours are evidently made to be inspired, filled, and ruled by the idea of God. Apart from God, the soul is an eye without light—an ear without harmony—a world without a sun. (2) *It is contrary to our felt obligations.* Everywhere, in human souls, is there the sense of duty to reverence the great, to adore the perfect, and to thank the benevolent. How has the sense of gratitude stimulated men to remember the benefactor! The chisel of the sculptor, the pen of the historian, and the lyre of the poet, it has ever employed, and is still employing, to celebrate his memory. But *Infinite* goodness appeals to gratitude, in voices ten thousand times as numerous and loud, to "Remember thy Creator." (3) *It is contrary to our circumstances.* Has God left us without witnesses? Have we no memorials of his being? We are surrounded by mementoes. *There is holy nature.* God is in every part of nature—in every object—in every ray of light—in every breath of air. He moves in all its forces—he appears in all its forms—he speaks in all its sounds. He inspires, he fills, he encircles that system of nature in which we live, and move, and have our being, and from which we cannot extricate ourselves. *There is the holy Bible.* Here we see him in vision and miracle, in judgments and in

mercies, in the teaching of the prophets and the apostles, and, above all, in the life of Jesus. There he is manifest in the flesh. How monstrous, therefore, is it for man to forget God!

III. ITS DESTINY IS APPALLING. "The hypocrite's hope shall perish." (1) *False life loses its hopes.* Hopes are some of the most precious things of life: they nerve us with courage in trial; they soothe us in solitude; they shed a cheering ray on the darkest scenes of life. The false have hopes. They picture a bright vision. They have their Elysium and their Paradise; but their hopes shall *perish*. Few things are more distressing among men than disappointment. In proportion to the greatness of the lost hope will be the greatness of the disappointment. Heaven is the greatest hope, and, consequently, the loss of heaven will be the greatest disappointment;—every star quenched—a future black as midnight! What a catastrophe! (2) *False life loses its supports.* "Whose trust shall be a spider's web." Observe, first, that every false man's spirit rests on some support—friendship, skill, imaginary personal merit, social approbation. On some of these it is leaning. Second, that all the supports of the false are feeble. They are compared here to the spider's house. You have seen the spider's web spread upon the tree and sparkling in the sun! How subtle and slight! The fall of a leaf, the gentlest zephyr, or the rush of an insect, will break it down. A significant figure this of the frail things on which the false are leaning. Although the house, which their imaginations rear as their future home, may be large and elegant, furnished with all the elements of the highest gratification, it is still the spider's web,—a *fiction*. It may stand and gleam under the rays of health, but in the storms of affliction, and in the convulsions of death, it will be torn to pieces. (3) *Though feeble, they are often held with the greatest tenacity until the last.* "He shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure." You have seen the spider, when the high wind has torn his feeble

house, holding with tenacity to a single thread, and swinging in the empty air. So it is, and ever has been, with false men, holding to some false support to the last. The time comes when they feel deeply the need of real support, and they grasp, with an awful avidity, the last relic of those things on which they once depended. See that man, who has fallen from his bark into the surging deep yonder, how he struggles with the waves; how eagerly he looks for something on which to fix his hold. A rope is thrown to his rescue. How eagerly he seizes it; but, alas! unfortunately it is not connected with the ship; consequently it affords him no support. It is a delusion and a snare. It sinks with him. An emblem this of what will assuredly happen to the false man in the great tempests of the future! He will be struggling in the billows. The last thing he clutches will not be connected with the great bark of truth; and although he seizes it with the energy of a dying man, he and it will sink together, and be seen no more. I know not of a more awful picture of misery than this:—a frail, finite soul, bereft of all its support, standing alone in the universe, without anything on which to rely!—neither a friend nor a God! but a black, starless, hopeless futurity as its doom.

Learn from this, my hearer, the all-important fact, that thy highest interest is to be a *true man*—true to thy nature, true to thy felt obligations, true to thy circumstances, and, consequently, true to thy God! Unless thou hast supreme love to him, thou hast no true life. With all thy education, thy conventional morality, thy artificial adornments, thy good name, thy seeming before men, thou art nought, morally, but a *rush*. Thy supports are but as the spider's web, which, although thou mightest maintain them until the last moment, must give way, and leave thee to fall into the dark abyss, to float along, a friendless, hopeless, godless soul, through an interminable future. "For, behold (although), God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil-doers."

Analysis of Homily the Thirty-sixth.

“Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory?”—ROM. ix. 21—23.

SUBJECT:—*Honour and Dishonour; or, the Work of the Sinner and the Work of God.*

WELL might Peter affirm of Paul's writings that they contain “some things hard to be understood.” His thoughts, at times, seem to be inconsistent with each other, with other portions of revealed truth, and also with some of our most fundamental notions of moral propriety. The inconsistency, however, we believe, is formal, not real; arising from a defectiveness in the interpretations and generalizations of the reader, and not from any confusion or incoherency in the mind of the writer. Perhaps no portion of the apostle's writings has, on the one hand, suggested more theological difficulties, and instigated more controversies, than the chapter containing our text; nor, on the other hand, disclosed a larger amount of broad, disciplining, and self-evidential truth. Although a critical exposition comes not within our present purpose or power, we would, nevertheless, suggest that an accurate settlement of three questions is necessary in order to reach the exact meaning of the apostle:—First, what does he mean by the word ELECTION? Secondly, does he refer to rational and temporal blessings, or to personal and spiritual? Thirdly. What is his grand object in the whole? We will not at present commit ourselves to any opinion upon the first two questions, involving, as they do, a large variety of opinion amongst good men. The last, however, is easy of solution: it is evidently to meet certain objections which the Jews would feel to the calling of the Gentiles to the blessings of Christianity, the new religion. The words

read bring to our minds a few thoughts which may minister to our spiritual life and culture.

I. THAT ALL MEN ARE MADE OF ONE COMMON NATURE. "We," as the old prophet has it, "are the clay, and thou our Potter; and we are all the work of thy hand." We are all of one nature and origin. Our exploring expeditions, our scientific researches, and the labours of our missionaries have brought abundant evidence to prove that, notwithstanding the vast variety in colour, conformation, habit, internal tendencies, and external circumstances, there is such a correspondence both in the *physical* and *spiritual* structure of the fair Caucasian, the black Ethiopian, and the copper-coloured races of Asia, Australia, and America, as to corroborate the biblical declaration, that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth."

Let us not be satisfied in admitting the truth of this doctrine. Let us learn, and work out in life, the practical inferences. Let us *reverence the rights of all*—regard each man, of whatever hue, form, or location, as having certain rights as sacred and dear as our own. No mercantile enterprise, no patriotism or nationality, no religious zeal or proselytism, could ever justify us in offering the slightest indignity to that right which belongs to man as man, to the free use of his limbs and soul, to the product of his labour, to the formation, utterance, and development of his opinion. *Let us sympathize with the woes of all.* If we love not our brother "whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen?" Like the good Samaritan, let us lift our prostrate nature from the dust wherever we find it, stanch its bleeding wounds, and help to bear it on its way. *Let us diffuse that Gospel which is the great want of all.* The soul of all peoples is haunted with the visions of an innocence that is sacrificed, and an Eden that is lost; and everywhere is it scared with the sense of a guilt that is contracted, and the idea of a judgment that is coming on. Man, the world over, is a brother, in moral instincts, remorseful

memories, and spiritual needs. From the nether deeps of his heart there rises an inarticulate, but a loud and lasting cry for the help the Gospel offers. Ought we not to lift up the CRUCIFIED ONE to the eye of our common humanity, and say, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world?"

II. THAT OF MEN MADE OF THE SAME NATURE, PART IS BEING "FITTED FOR DESTRUCTION," AND PART FOR GLORY. The word destruction does not refer either to existence, consciousness, or obligations,—these, we believe, will never be destroyed,—but to HAPPINESS. It is here put in antithesis to glory, and glory means all that is blissful in being. Now, it is here implied that there are certain men being fitted or framed for the destruction of all happiness, and others being "prepared" for all that is glorious. This is, unquestionably, a solemn thought. Is it true? There are ~~three~~ things which show its truth:—First. *The inevitable tendency of the two great principles that rule mankind.* There are two, and but two, chief and all-important principles in the spiritual world—*selfishness* and *love*, or sin and holiness. In heaven, love alone reigns; in hell, selfishness alone reigns; on earth, the two principles reign: and hence, on earth, we have two moral kingdoms, the one of darkness, and the other of light. Every man is under the government of one of these two principles. Now, the one tends to the decrease of happiness, and the other to its increase; the one fits for destruction, and the other prepares for glory; the one tends to quench hopes, the other to kindle them; the one to dissolve friendships, the other to perfect and perpetuate them; the one to break all peace of mind, the other to fill the soul with joy unspeakable; the one to enervate and fetter all the spiritual powers, the other to invigorate and enfranchise them. Show me a man under the influence of selfishness, and you will show a man whose nature is undergoing a rapid process of deterioration; there is a cloud on his horizon that shall blacken and spread until it obscures every light; and

though it launch everlasting thunders, and flash eternal lightnings, it shall never break and disappear. There is a blight in his atmosphere that shall wither every living plant, and leave his spiritual territory barren and bleak. There is a disease in his system that shall undermine his constitution, and bring on death. Secondly. *The actual experience of mankind.* Take two men as types of these two portions of our common humanity. One shall be SAUL. "He was a choice young man, and a goodly, and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he." He had, undoubtedly, a good mental, as well as a "goodly" corporeal, constitution; and on his great native intellect, and broad-hearted sympathies, the "Spirit of the Lord" once moved in his stirring and energising influence. But the man was selfish; and under this selfishness—the soul of every sin—he gradually lost his power and his peace. His selfishness continued to frame and fit him for "destruction," until, in the black cave of Endor, with a soul trembling and palsied through every fibre, he exclaims, "I am sore distressed. God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams." The other shall be DAVID, the son of Jesse. "Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to." He was but a shepherd boy; having, it would seem, nothing peculiarly great either in bodily or mental make; but his soul developed itself under the reign of a Divine and all-comprehensive love, which led him to "serve his generation." And you see this youth, in almost every step of his life, getting new power, and rising into new glory. By glory I mean not the high rank and political dominion which he attained in the world, but the glory of that spirit of his which continued to free itself from trammels, increase in force, emerge into higher realms of thought and feeling, and approach nearer, and nearer still, to the ETERNAL ALL, until it could sing, in rapturous notes, "The Lord is my portion."

Now, all this is abundantly confirmed by Scripture, which represents all men as pursuing two paths, the one to destruc-

tion, and the other to everlasting life—some sowing to the flesh, and reaping corruption, and some to the spirit, and reaping everlasting life.

Here, then, is a momentous *fact* in human history—a fact independent of the Bible. Prove, if you will, this book to be a cunningly-devised fable—sweep every vestige of it from the habitations of men—it is still a *fact*, developed under every man's eye in his dealings with society, and coming within every man's consciousness, that one portion of the human race is being constantly framed for destruction—ever losing some element of real power and happiness—and the other portion is being “prepared” for glory—getting accessions of spiritual energy, freedom, and true virility, every day. No law in the universe is more manifest to me than this—“that unto him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.”

III. THAT WHILST GOD COULD HAVE “FITTED” MEN FOR DESTRUCTION, HIS WORK IS TO “PREPARE” THEM FOR GLORY. We are not ignorant of the objection that might, at the outset, be raised against this position. It might be said, Is not God represented as blinding men's eyes, making their hearts fat, and their ears heavy; and as hardening the heart of Pharaoh? True. But, evidently when such works as these are referred to God, they must be referred to him in an *occasional*, not in a *casual*—an *incidental*, not an *intentional*—a *permissive*, not a *predestinating* sense. Otherwise, indeed, moral evil is a Divine institution, moral greatness is a delusion, and moral virtue an idle dream.

Regarding the distinction we have propounded as obviating the proposed objection, let us proceed to the illustration of the position before us; and, in doing this, there are two circumstances which we must observe:—First. *That the apostle does not affirm that God has ever fitted any being for destruction; and there are reasons to believe that he has never done so.* All that Paul expresses is, not that the Al-

mighty makes any for dishonour, or fits any for destruction, but that he has the *power* to do so; and this he states to silence the supposed objection of the narrow-minded Jews to the Gentiles' admission to the blessings of Christianity. Now, the possession of this power by the ABSOLUTE ONE cannot for a moment be questioned. He could organise beings for misery, make suns the centres of revolving hells, and the vaulted universe resound with the groans of agonized souls: but, instead of there being any reason to believe that he has ever thus employed his power, there are evidences on the contrary. *There is analogy.* Ask the astronomer, who has taken innumerable worlds within the sweep of his telescope, if he has discovered, amongst the teeming myriads, one solitary orb that seemed to him made for "dishonour?" or ask the man who studies the "living world on tiny leaves," and microscopic atoms, if he, in that vast and hidden universe of his, has found one living thing which he considered was formed for dishonour, or made for torture? *There is the human constitution.* Whether you look at it *physically*, with its varied members and organs, so exquisitely formed and put together in a beauteous and harmonious whole, walking erectly, fronting the world with eyes on heaven, and lord of all that lives beneath the stars; or *psychologically*, with an intellect to reduce the universe to *truth*, and bear it along triumphantly in its path of thought, and a soul to mingle in the worship of seraphs, and "delight in God;"—can you, I say, look at man's constitution in either of these aspects, and affirm that he was made for dishonour? *There is the conscience.* Does the conscience ever testify to the ruined sinner that he was made for destruction?—that God hardened him? Oh, no! Were this the case, there could be no remorse—no moral hell.

These reasons, without others that might be cited, are sufficient to show that God neither makes men for dishonour nor fits them for destruction; and the fact that he has the power to do so, and has never done it, is a magnificent illustration of that boundless mercy which declares, "As I

live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." The second thing which we have to observe, in illustrating our position, is, that whilst the apostle does not affirm that God fits any for destruction, he, nevertheless, does affirm *that he prepares men for glory; and there are abundant reasons to believe the fact.* "He had afore prepared unto glory." There are numerous reasons to believe that this is God's *will* and *aim* in all his dealings with men. There, for instance, is *the spiritual influence of nature.* The spiritual function of nature, as an educator of the human soul, though frequently overlooked, can never be denied. There is a mystic SPIRIT penetrating, and throbbing through, every part of this material universe. You may call it *beauty* in the flowery fields, *sublimity* in the surging main, *glory* in the "terrible crystal," or *divinity* in all; but whatever you call it, I feel that it is a ministering spirit to my soul. "It moves upon the face of the inner deep" of my being, and tends to educe from its chaos the true "life and light" of souls. There is nothing in it to fit "for destruction," but everything to prepare for glory. I often wonder how men can sin abroad, in the bright fields of holy nature. *There, again, is the special system of mediation.* This includes the extraordinary communications which God made to humanity during the first four thousand years; the mission, teaching, works, suffering, death, and exaltation of Christ; the ministry of the Gospel, and the agency of the spirit. In view of all this, who can maintain, for a moment, the notion that God fits men for destruction?

IV. THE HISTORY OF ALL MEN, WHATEVER THEIR DESTINY, ILLUSTRATES THE CHARACTER OF GOD. In relation to the destroyed, there is the manifestation of "*long-suffering*,"—"power,"—"wrath;" and in relation to the saved, there is the manifestation of the "*riches of his glory*."

Learn, my brother, a lesson or two from this solemn subject. Learn *that the most solemn attribute of thy nature is the power to misappropriate the blessings of God.* Yonder are

two plants side by side, rooted in the same soil, visited by the same showers, and shone on by the same sun; the one transmutes all into what will poison life, and the other into that which will sustain it. So it may be with thee. The very elements that are preparing the men by thy side for glory—by the perverse use of that wonderful power of moral freedom which God has given thee—may be fitting thee for destruction. *Learn, again, that the most momentous work in the world is the formation of character.* It is either a soul-saving or a soul-destroying process. What wouldst thou think of a man who stood from morning until evening on the banks of the Thames, casting portions of his property into the bosom of the rolling river? But if thou art forming an ungodly character, thou art doing worse folly than this: every moment thou art flinging away a portion of thy true power and peace—*thou art wasting thy spiritual self.* That vessel in the docks yonder, which the architect, either from recklessness or ignorance, is constructing on a principle which necessarily unfits her to stand the swelling surges and the hostile gale, you would say, is “fitted for destruction;” so, in very truth, is thy character, if built on the principle of selfishness.

Analysis of Homily the Thirty-seventh.

“Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.”—JOB xxi. 22.

SUBJECT:—*Mental Independency of God.*

THE mental independency of God involves two things—*uninstructibleness* and *irresponsibleness*. The former in man is either a calamity or a crime. It is a calamity where either the means and capacity are lacking; but it is a crime where both exist, and instruction is not received. But that which in any finite intelligence would be either a misfortune or a sin, is a glorious *perfection* in God. It is the glory of God that he *cannot* be instructed—that no one can teach him knowledge. He knows all things, *actual* and *possible*. But

whilst the former ought not to exist in any intelligent creature, the latter irresponsibility *does* not exist. No being is authorized to use his knowledge in any way he may think fit. All rational creatures are *accountable* for the *use* of their knowledge. Not so with God. He can use his infinite knowledge in any way he pleases. He is answerable to none : all are responsible to him. If God be thus mentally independent of others—both for the *possession* and *use* of his knowledge—we may deduce the following truths :—

I. THAT ALL HIS OPERATIONS MUST EMANATE FROM PURE SOVEREIGNTY. All that exists must be traced to the counsel of his own will. He received neither the *plan* nor *motive* for any act. CREATION—REDEMPTION—CONVERSION—every part of each—every divine movement in connexion with each—rises out of benevolent spontaneity. We infer—

II. THAT ALL HIS LAWS MUST BE THE TRANSCRIPT OF HIS OWN MIND. It is seldom just to regard human laws as a correct reflection of the mind of the sovereign, for a human sovereign, in most cases, receives counsels and suggestions from others ; but as God has had no “counsellor,” his laws are the expression of himself. What they are, HE IS. The history of his government is the history of HIMSELF. Irresponsible power in a creature would be despotism, but in God it has, from the beginning, been mercy. He could have *damned* the world, but he has *planned* to save it.

III. THAT ALL HIS DISPENSATIONS SHOULD BE CORDIALLY ACQUIESCED IN. (1) *Rectitude dictates this*. The Absolute Mind has a right to do what he does. (2) *Expediency dictates this*. Opposition is useless. No being can give him a new *idea* or *motive*, and, therefore, no one can turn him from his course.

IV. THAT ALL HIS REVELATIONS SHOULD BE PROPERLY STUDIED. A book from a mind absolutely independent should be studied (1) *with an expectation of difficulties* ; (2) *with the profoundest reverence*.

Analysis of *Homily the Thirty-eighth.*

“And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne,” &c.—REV. vii. 13—15.

SUBJECT :—*Humanity in Heaven.*

THERE is one book, and but one, that presents to us *humanity in heaven*, and that is the Bible. This passage gives us a vision of unnumbered multitudes of men who once traversed this earthly scene of sin and sorrow, now in the bright world of the good. It teaches three facts concerning them—

I. THAT THEIR EARTHLY LIFE WAS DISTINGUISHED BY TRIAL. An “elder” in those high realms of blessedness—struck, it may be, with certain peculiarities in their appearance and worship, puts to John the interrogatory what they were, and whence they came; and the reply he receives is, that they had come out of great tribulation, &c. *Tribulation is the common lot of humanity, and ever the discipline of the good.* (1) *This should teach us contentment under our trials.* “No temptation has happened unto us,” &c. (2) *This should inspire us with magnanimity under our trials.* These tribulations are useful. Like the gales of the mariner, they bear us away from scenes on which our heart is set. The darkest thunder-cloud terrifies but for an hour; it soon passes away, and leaves the air clearer and the heavens brighter than before.

II. THAT THEIR CELESTIAL CIRCUMSTANCES ARE PRE-EMINENTLY GLORIOUS. Look at their *appearance—employment—companionship—blessedness*. They are in “white robes,” emblems of purity and conquest; they are “before the throne,”—a situation of high dignity in the Divine Empire; they “serve him day and night,”—indicating the entire con-

separation of their time and powers; “he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them;”—they enjoy intimate communion with the Sovereign of all: they “hunger no more,” &c.—they are freed from evil, and brought into the full enjoyment of all blessings.

III. THAT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY CONDITION IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO CHRIST. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. THEREFORE are they before the throne. Three things are here implied:—*that they were originally polluted: that the death of Christ has a purifying influence; and that their cleansing by this influence had taken place when on earth.*

Ye modern Pharisees, who base your hope of heaven upon your own works; ye children of superstition and priestly imposition, who anticipate heaven because of your connexion with the ceremonies of certain churches; ye thoughtless worldlings, who ground your expectation of a happy futurity on the mercy of the everlasting Father: mark well the THEREFORE of the text. Why is this “great multitude, which no man could number,” in heaven? Because they were great patriots, who had battled for their country’s political weal?—or philanthropists, who had made sacrifice for the improvement and elevation of their race?—or eminent seers, who, standing on the mount of prophecy, pointed their generation to glorious events that were marching on?—or sages, who explored vast regions of truth, and propounded discoveries that helped on humanity in its career of intelligence and civilization?—or men, who preached eloquently, prayed earnestly, and lived morally? No; no; and again no. All these things are good, and in heaven they will have their reward. But *Christ is the reason of men’s heaven.* Every human spirit traces its heaven up to Christ. *Therefore* are they, &c.

Analysis of Homily the Thirty-ninth.

“Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.”—2 PET. i. 13—15.

WE have here a view of our *earthly mode* of being. The body is not *us*, it is *ours*,—our residence; a residence not built of marble, and founded on rock, but a temporary “booth,” pitched here during our short pilgrimage, rocking in every breeze, and destined to come down.

SUBJECT:—*Man’s Earthly Mode of Being.*

I. HERE IS A FELT DUTY CONNECTED WITH THIS MODE OF BEING. “I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up,” &c. What was the work the apostle felt he had to do? *The spiritual excitation of the Christian soul.* He sought to put Christians in mind of five things which he refers to in the context:—*That spiritual excellence is the great end of Christianity* (3rd and 4th verses); *that spiritual excellence is progressive in its nature* (5th and 7th verses); *that it requires very diligent cultivation* (5th and 10th verses); *that it is the only guarantee of salvation* (9th verse); and *that it will ultimately meet with a glorious reward* (11th verse).

Now, there are three important things implied in the apostle’s aim: (1) A paramount necessity for the Christian ever to feel these things. His own progress and the conversion of the world depend upon this. (2) A sad tendency in the Christian to forget these things. (3) An obligation which one Christian has to endeavour spiritually to excite others by these things.

II. A DESTINED CHANGE THAT AWAITS THIS MODE OF BEING. “Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle.” There are three things to be observed here:—(1) *The nature of the change.* It is a putting off the tabernacle.

It is but the soldier laying by his panoply, or the tenant changing his house. (2) *The nearness of the change.* "Shortly." (2) *The assurance of the change.* "Knowing." It is not a subject of doubt.

III. A GLORIOUS CAUSE THAT MUST OUTLIVE THIS MODE OF BEING. "Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance." Three things implied:—(1) *The necessity of Christianity to posterity.* All generations require it; therefore it must be handed down. (2) *The felt interest of the good in posterity.* They are far more anxious to bequeath truth and godliness than estates or empires. (3) *The capacity of men to help posterity.* Through a holy life, and instructions oral or written. A book is a kind of ark, which will convey a man's thoughts, sympathies, and soul, over the flood of centuries, to new generations of men.

Properly estimate, my Christian friend, *thy mortal mode of life.* Thou art dwelling in a tabernacle. I would not have thee ascetically to despise thy body, for it is the workmanship of God; an exquisite instrument of the soul; that through which it receives and communicates; the *inlet* of the material, and the *outlet* of the spiritual. But I would have thee to remember that it is not *thyself*, but a temporary habitation of that soul of thine, which is identified with a Gospel in which the universe is interested, and upon which the salvation of thy race depends. Realize the vastness of the work thou hast to do while in thy frail tabernacle, and do it; and then thou shalt put it off, as the conqueror doffs his armour with exultant heart:—then thou shalt pass away from earth.

"As sets the morning star, which goes not down
Behind the darkened west, nor hides obscured
Among the tempests of the sky, but melts away,
Into the light of heaven."

Analysis of Homily the Fortieth.

“And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loosen the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy,” &c.—REV. v. 1—7.

SUBJECT:—*The Government of God.*

I. THAT IT IS CONDUCTED ACCORDING TO A VAST PRECONCERTED PLAN. There was a book—seven pieces of parchment rolled together, and each one sealed—in the hand of him that sat upon the throne. The Almighty never acts from *impulse* or *caprice*, but ever from plan or law; and this plan is truly *vast*—wonderfully comprehensive. “It is written within and on the backside.” This book contains the germs of all books—the archetypes of all existences—the outlines of all histories. “In thy book all my members were written, when as yet there was none of them.” All that shall happen through the vast futurities of individuals—families—nations—worlds—are mapped out on the pages of this wonderful book. The universe, in all its parts and complicated movements, is but the practical and palpable working out of its contents.

“The world is God’s great will in action.”

Predestination is no special doctrine of the Bible; it is written on every part of nature; it includes as truly the motions of an atom as the revolutions of a world—the growth of a plant as the conversion of a soul. True philosophy, as well as Christianity, resolves everything but *sin* into the *predestination* of Infinite love.

II. THIS VAST PRECONCERTED PLAN IS SEALED IN MYSTERY. Two thoughts are here suggested concerning its mystery:—First, *That it transcends all finite intelligence.* Some high spirit in the divine empire is here represented as exclaiming,

“Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?” The question falls on the ear of universal mind, and produces no response; the challenge rings through the creation, and no one accepts it. “No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.” We refer this mystery not to the *Creator’s intention*, but to the *creature’s incapacity*. His glory is not in concealing only, but in manifesting. Concealment arises not from any effort on his part, but from the necessary limitation of finite intellect. The deep purposes of the Infinite can never be unsealed and deciphered by the finite. “His judgments are a great deep.” Secondly. Another thought suggested, concerning its mystery, is, *that it is frequently the source of great mental distress*. “I wept much,” says John, “because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.” The most earnest thinkers, in all ages, have shed many tears in wrestling with some of the dark problems of God’s government. This mystery, however, is an inestimable means of spiritual discipline: it *soberizes—humbles—stimulates*.

III. THAT THE MYSTERY OF THIS PLAN IS TO BE EXPOUNDED BY CHRIST. “And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.” Both the meaning of the figures employed, and the statements in the succeeding verses, make it evident that the reference is here to Christ. He, indeed, is the revealer of God’s plans—the *LOGOS*. He discloses the eternal purposes in various ways. (1) *In his creative acts*. “All things were created by him.” Creation is a bursting of one of the seals of that book, and a publication of some of its contents. Stars, suns, and systems are but the palpable forms or diagrams of Infinite *ideas*. (2) *In his redemptive operations*. By his personal history on this earth eighteen centuries ago, and his spiritual agency here from Adam to that period, and from that period, in a higher

form, to this hour, he burst other seals, and brought to light some "deep thing" of the eternal mind. (3) *In his judicial conduct.* "The father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." In the last day what new disclosures will be made!

"Weep not," then, my perplexed friend, on account of the mysteries that surround thee; the Redeemer of the whole is he who has assumed thy nature, and has thy interest at heart. Learn of him, and he shall lead thy spirit on; he will burst new seals, and open new pages as thy faculties expand. He has many things to say unto thee, but thou canst not bear them yet. What thou knowest not now thou shalt know hereafter.

Analysis of Homily the Forty-first.

"Let all the angels of God worship him."—HEB. i. 6.

SUBJECT :—*Christ the Object of Angelic Worship.*

THIS passage directs us to a truth which is frequently expressed,* and more frequently implied, in various parts of God's Word—namely, that angels are engaged in rendering worship to Jesus Christ. Assuming this to be the case, the following deductions appear just and important :—

I. IF ANGELS WORSHIP CHRIST, HIS CLAIMS TO WORSHIP ARE UNDOUBTED. There are only two conceivable causes for the worshipping of false gods :—(1) *The want of intelligence.* The devotees are the victims of ignorance. (2) *The want of right sympathies.* In Christian England men are found at the shrines of false deities, not from ignorance, but from *secularized sympathies*. The Bible assures us that angels are distinguished both by *high intelligence* and *high rectitude*.

* Rev. v. 11—14.

II. IF ANGELS WORSHIP CHRIST, THEN THE OBLIGATIONS OF MEN TO DO SO MUST BE IMMENSE. They worship him on the ground of what he is in himself, as the brightness of his Father's glory; on the ground of what he is to them as their Author, Sustainer, and Instructor: and on the ground, perhaps, of the salutary influence which his mediation has exerted indirectly on their well-being. But, in addition to all this, he has other claims to man's worship. *He wears man's nature—he expiates man's sins—he represents man's interests—he works for man's redemption.* How inconsistent and how vile it is for man to despise and neglect him, while angels are bowing at his throne, and hymning his praise.

III. IF ANGELS WORSHIP CHRIST, THEN A PRESIDING SYMPATHY WITH HIM IS THE NECESSARY MEETNESS FOR HEAVEN. The Bible assures us that all heaven worships Christ: that

“There all

The multitude of angels, with a shout,
Loud as from numbers without number;
Sweet as from blessed voices uttering joy. Heaven rings
With jubilee and loud hosannas
Fill the eternal regions.”

Whatever may be the differences prevailing between these myriads, in their ages, the structure of their minds, the extent of their attainments, the rank they occupy in the Divine kingdom—though they differ as much as the new-born babes differ from the highest seraph in the creation—still they are *one* in devotion to Christ. Every eye is fixed on him; all thoughts are directed to him; around him, as the centre, all souls revolve. There is no heaven in the universe without this presiding sympathy with Christ. It is the air, the light, the beauty, and the inspiration of the scene. It is ever connected with two things—*an appreciative knowledge of him* and *an unreserved concurrence with him*. The one is the necessary antecedent, and the other is the invariable result.

Analysis of Homily the Forty-second.

"If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more : circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews ; as touching the law, a Pharisee ; concerning zeal, persecuting the church ; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ."—PHIL. iii. 4—7.

SUBJECT :—*Compensation.*

THE apostle Paul was well acquainted with the strength of Judaism and the weak points of Christianity. If, as some tell us, there are flaws in the evidence by which we become convinced of the Divine origin of Christianity, they must have been glaring enough when Paul began to preach the faith that he once destroyed. The haze of centuries *now* magnifies the marvel with which *he* stood face to face ; but, such as it was then, it vanquished him. In his society we are surely free from all that is narrow-minded or one-sided. He did not renounce Judaism out of pique or prejudice, nor was he so blind to the merit and dignity of the old religion that he ever trifled with or ridiculed it. The phraseology of the above passage is clear evidence of the price he set upon it. With that calm earnestness and quiet strength for which he is so remarkable, he first enumerates several things here that a man might easily be proud of, then gives us his opinion about them, and afterwards his substitute for them. These things, which were counted gain by the old church, have much that is germane to them in the phases of modern faith.

Let us consider—

I. The summation which the apostle makes of these presumed privileges.

First. Sacramental regeneration. "*Circumcised the eighth day.*" The respect paid to circumcision was not unlike the feeling with which baptism is regarded by many Christian people. The "church" spoken of in the New Testament is

supposed to be a visible organization of the true theocracy, and baptism is considered the rite and seal of initiation into this community. Such admission to the so-called church being considered necessary to salvation, evils have been conjured into existence for the sake of obviating them by "the grace of baptism." The taint, or evil, of "original sin" has been so described that it matters very little whether its consequences follow or not; and then the *effect* of baptism has been so portrayed as to make it appear that, if this effect is observable in the life of a man, it is impossible to prove that baptism was *not* the cause of the change; but, on the other hand, if this effect does not follow baptism, then its grace has been sinned away. Those who think that baptism, like circumcision, admits to the fellowship of that society—which is inclusive of all the saved, and exclusive of none—must also consider that to be circumcised, or baptized, on the eighth or any earlier or later day, is great gain.

Secondly. Distinguished ancestry. "*Of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews.*" Men, generally, are proud of honours which belong to them by providential arrangement. Paul had something to boast of here. In his veins ran the blood which had quivered amid Egyptian plagues, and rushed to the hearts of those that heard the voice of Sinai's trumpet. It must have required great moral courage to ignore the fact that he belonged to the people "whose were the fathers, to whom pertained the giving of the law and the covenants." To this day, Jews are proud of hereditary claims, even if they have renounced all confidence in their traditionary faith; and there are thousands among us who are content to waive the spiritual demands of the Gospel, and who stifle all the pleadings of guilty conscience, by the proud but stupid conviction that they are born in a Christian country, and have inherited a blessing from their ancestry.

Thirdly. Religious persuasion. "*As touching the law, a Pharisee.*" An honest Pharisee, the earnest "tractarian"

of the olden time, might well be proud of the life he had poured into a half-dead system—of the galvanic contortions and activity he had induced in the self-made skeleton of formulæ and fancies, which he had persuaded himself were the genuine traditions of the fathers. Amid the scepticism of the times, the Pharisees, as a sect, rallied around themselves all the eager and earnest religious spirit which was then to be found in the nation. They were proud of their sect: they identified it with true religion, and considered it to be the glory of their land. We have the same things amongst us now. Men who think more of their party than of their Saviour; more of the modes and usages of their church than of the “church of the living God” itself; more of the creeds to which they have sworn than the Bible, which vitalizes all true creeds.

Fourthly. Religious earnestness. “*Concerning zeal, persecuting the church.*” This was the highest compliment Paul could pay to his old zeal. It would strike a chord which would vibrate deeply in the heart of a bigoted Jew. It is well to remember the verdict Paul pronounces upon *mere earnestness*:—It may be “blasphemy.” It may be “a good thing.” Let us not forget that the world is disposed to worship before the shrine of zeal—to substitute earnestness for truth—to estimate enthusiasm in a *bad cause* as a holier thing than the indolent profession of a *good* one.

Fifthly. Ceremonial blamelessness, and legal righteousness. “*Touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*” Paul could defy the priest to have found him tripping. He had the garment that was unspotted; he enjoyed a name that was unsullied. So far as such righteousness could have quenched his thirst for life, he possessed a full cistern. If with the law his spiritual hunger could have been appeased, he had bread enough and to spare. Let us notice—

II. The estimate which the apostle was disposed to make of these doubtful advantages. He condemns them all with a word. It is enough with him to say, that to lean upon

THEM would be equivalent to putting "*confidence in the flesh.*" He regards the whole thing as *carnal*. *Confidence* in any part of it, he therefore holds to be purely preposterous. A reliance upon any, or all, of these things, involved no spiritual change. An unspiritual man might possess all that has been described as "great gain." His blood may be pure; his sacramental initiation may be perfect; his religious sect held in high estimation: he may be bigoted in his adherence to a true creed; and as far as his respectability and ceremonial purity may carry him, he may stand the severest test;—yet, with all this, there will be no guarantee whatsoever of a spiritual life. A man may gain all this world of honour, and lose his own soul.

III. The course which the apostle had been prepared to adopt. "*What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.*" No one could say he underrated them. No one could charge him with ignorance of them. He knew them, and deliberately prepared to forego all their advantages, because he had found Christ, who gave him that which no rank, no sect, no mere earnestness, no legal righteousness, could confer. He felt a love constraining him. He found a life within him—a resting place for his immortal soul—a home in the bosom of his God! He found adequate COMPENSATION for his loss. The reckoning he had made of loss was not an idle boast: he knew his own history, but was no braggart. For Christ, he says, "*I have suffered the loss of all things.*" The thing is done! But he takes no credit to himself in the matter. "*And do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him.*" The elevation of his taste, the spirituality of his character, prove that his COMPENSATION was sufficient, his *substitute* divine!

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Analysis of Homily the Forty-third.

“How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!”—PSALM cxxxix. 17.

SUBJECT:—*Precious Thoughts.*

WE use the term religion in two senses;—in what metaphysicians would call an *objective* sense, and a *subjective* sense. In its *objective* sense, it designates the system of revealed truth—the facts, doctrines, precepts, and promises of the Bible. As it lies in the book, we call it a religion; the Christian religion. In its *subjective* sense, it designates the temper of our thoughts and feelings towards this revelation. When a man believes what is in the Bible, and lives in accordance with it, we call his faith and his life religious: we say that he is a religious man. In other words, this term religion, in its popular use, describes either *God's thoughts towards us*, or *our thoughts towards God*. Commonly, we speak of the latter as being the practical duty to which we seek to urge men. Our arguments and efforts are directed to induce in them right thoughts of God. Now, however, we speak of the former—of God's thoughts towards us, inasmuch as the one is dependent upon the other; a knowledge of God's thoughts towards us being essential to produce in us right thoughts towards him. Strictly speaking, the former is theology, and the latter religion.

It scarcely need be explained what is meant when we speak of “thoughts.” Thinking is the proper action of the mind; “thoughts” are the result of that action. We receive certain impressions—we begin to muse over them, to combine them, to compare them, make deductions from them, see of what they are capable, and whither they lead. We put like things together, contrast different things, and come to certain conclusions: the process is thinking, the result is thought. So that we might define “thoughts” as opinions about facts.

The character of every moral being is indicated by the character of his thoughts. “As a man thinketh in his heart

so is he." Thought is the offspring of the heart as well as of the intellect; for although it is the latter only that properly thinks, yet the former chooses the subject of thought, puts it into the intellect, superintends the thinking process, and guides it to its conclusions. Hence we always judge a man by his thoughts, as they are expressed to us by his words and actions. Men express their thoughts in different ways. Some men, when they have a thought, *speak it*; others *write it*—put it into a book; others *act it*—embody it in a deed. But thoughts are the seeds of all things, and therefore the foundation of all character.

Hence there is a great difference between *great* thoughts and *good* thoughts. Thoughts may be intellectually great, and, at the same time, morally bad. A man may be very clever, and yet very wicked; and he may be very weak, and yet very good. The bad heart of a man may put evil things into a great intellect;—hence your profligate poems and godless infidelities—literary incarnations of the devil. A perfect moral being is one who combines the great with the good. This is precisely our idea of the Supreme Being—an infinite intellect under the direction of a perfect moral nature. Hence we call him "God." Our conception of the devil—the evil one—is, of a mighty intellect employed by a moral nature thoroughly unholy. Hence the importance of acquainting ourselves with God's thoughts—his thoughts towards us. It will determine our estimation of him, and our reverence for him.

We can, of course, speak of God's "thoughts" only as he has expressed them to us. We can know nothing of the Divine mind—nothing of the Divine thoughts as such—only of their results. We recognise God's thoughts simply in what he has said and done. This opens a very wide field to us; for everything that God has done—everything that is, in the physical and moral universe—is an embodied thought of the Divine mind. In the *material* world, God has expressed his "thoughts" in *actions*; in the Bible, he has expressed them in *words*. The very nature of the case, in

each instance, determined this. When, in the former, I see his actions or works, I infer somewhat of his character. They declare "his eternal power and Godhead." But as a moral and responsible being, I am chiefly concerned to know his thoughts upon moral subjects—about law, holiness, sin, religion; for upon these his treatment of me depends. The creation cannot tell me of these. I might see a piece of mechanism—a watch or a steam-engine—exquisitely or powerfully made, but it would indicate to me only the skill or energy of the workman; it would be no index to me of his moral judgments or moral character. I turn, then, to the Bible, the book of God's written thoughts—written for the purpose of expressing his judgments upon these things—and these, pre-eminently, I call "precious thoughts." Other thoughts of God may interest me—these implicate me. David's exclamation has reference to God's providential care. It is suggested by a meditation upon his omniscience. God was thoughtful for his human wants. But it may fitly be resolved into a general principle. It is precisely one of those phrases that ought to be taken out of their connexion, and made a general principle of.

What is it that makes "thoughts" precious—any thoughts?

I. THOUGHTS ARE DEEMED PRECIOUS BY US WHEN THEY REGARD THINGS THAT, EITHER ABSOLUTELY OR RELATIVELY, ARE IMPORTANT. If we have any momentous question to investigate, any weighty matter to determine, we attach a certain value, according to our estimate of their wisdom, to the opinions of others; we carefully collect them, thoughtfully ponder them. If it be a matter that affects our personal interests, we are doubly solicitous; we want to know what our friends think about it, how deeply our interests are involved, in what points they are affected, in which way they will be determined, and, above all, if there be any individual with whom the determination of the matter rests, we are solicitous to know his thoughts. What would not the culprit give to know the thoughts of the judge who is trying

him, or of the jury who are to give their verdict concerning him?

You see how all this applies. We have momentous interests involved, and God has to decide them. His thoughts, therefore, are of the utmost moment to us. What will he do with us—save us, or permit us to perish? If he will save us, how will he accomplish it? Are we to co-operate in it? It is important that we have the contrivance explained; it is necessary, both to justify him in not punishing, and to secure our co-operation. Hence he tells us his thoughts—about an atonement, regeneration, preservation or providence, everlasting life. Precious things these to know God's thoughts about!

II. THOUGHTS ARE DEEMED PRECIOUS WHEN THEY ARE CHARACTERIZED BY ORIGINALITY. This is true of every kind of thought. In science, if a man make a great discovery—invent a steam-engine or an electric telegraph—all men do him honour. In literature, if a man write an original book, full of oratory and striking thought, even though it have no clearly defined or elevated purpose, we do honour to his genius. In devising “the plan of salvation,” God's thoughts lay claim to the highest originality; it sprang exclusively from the depths of his Infinite wisdom. How is man to be forgiven? It was God's exclusive thought. How is he to be renewed? It was God's exclusive thought. How is he to be “built up,” or perfected, in his “holy faith”? It was God's exclusive thought. How is he to be “preserved unto everlasting life”? It was God's exclusive thought. These are purely God's thinkings. We have reason to suppose that no other being was capable of such conceptions. Imagine the conditions given to any finite intelligence. Take two or three of these profound moral problems. Given, a guilty man, against whom the Divine justice has pronounced sentence, and the Divine truth affirmed the decision—to find how that justice may be satisfied, and that truth maintained, and the guilty man forgiven. This is the first problem. Take a second. Given, a polluted man, with a moral nature thoroughly de-

praved ; “ born in sin, and shapen in iniquity ;” his thoughts “ evil, and only evil, and that continually ”—to find how, without any violation of his voluntary agency, he may be transformed into a holy man : in other words, it is required “ to bring a clean thing out of an unclean.” Take a third problem. Given a feeble man—“ a babe in Christ ”—with but the germs of spiritual life within him, his principles weak and unestablished, retaining strong carnal passions, “ a law in his members that wars against the law of his mind ;” exposed, moreover, to a constant solicitation to evil from the world without him, and having an intelligent and powerful spiritual agency to tempt him ; who possesses every advantage of appliance and experience, and brings the outward solicitation to bear upon the inward corruption—to find an infallible means for his preservation, with due respect to his free agency.

The solution of these problems constitutes thoughts that we justly deem precious ; for had not God solved them for us they could not have been solved at all. He saw us in our misery, and devised this method of salvation. And we call it the chief product of his thinking ; so far as we know, God has devised nothing so grand as the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. It has all the characteristics of originality and truth.

III. THOUGHTS ARE DEEMED PRECIOUS WHEN THEY ARE FAVOURABLE TO OUR INTERESTS. God might have thought about our spiritual condition, and thought very profoundly and originally, and his conclusion might have been adverse to us : the moral difficulties might have been insuperable. Even then it would have been “ precious ” to have the terrible uncertainty resolved. But he has “ found a ransom,” and his thoughts are “ thoughts of peace ”—pardon to the condemned—salvation for the lost—life for the dead !

IV. THOUGHTS ARE SCARCELY PRECIOUS UNLESS THEY ARE FEASIBLE OR PRACTICABLE. God has thought about our

conditions, and his thoughts have been original and favourable. But if his were a finite intelligence, there would still be room to ask, Can they be realized? The world has had no lack of original thinkers—benevolent thinkers; it has had no lack of political “Utopias,” and ideal “republics,” and social millenniums; and very beautiful and beneficent they seem—on paper; but, alas! when their realization is attempted, they are found utterly impracticable. The stern facts of human nature will not fit in to the symmetrical outlines of poetic theory.

Redemption, *as a plan*, is a theory of moral relationship between guilty man and the holy God. Evidently, therefore, both these parties had to be considered in the devising of it. If God propose a method of salvation, it must meet the conditions of both: however incongruous they are with one another, the redemption must be in perfect harmony with both. It is a *mediation*, a reconciliation, a middle term, a connecting link, between two dis severed and discrepant parties; and it must therefore fit on, so to speak, with the attributes of the Divine nature, and the principles of the Divine government, on the one hand: and with the moral condition and accountability of human nature on the other. How, then, as it respects the Divine nature and government, do the moral principles of the mediation harmonize with them? Is the substitution of Christ as an incarnate Man, the making of *his* soul an offering for human sin, congruous with the quality and claims of justice and law? Is the gift of the Holy Spirit, to regenerate and sanctify the moral corruption of our human nature, and to guide us in our spiritual course, and to help us in our spiritual conflict, compatible with the proper principles and functions of a moral government of intelligent and voluntary beings? It would be easy to show that they are, and that there is nothing, therefore, on God's part, to prevent his “thoughts” being realized.

How is it, then, with ourselves, as the other party implicated in this great transaction? Does the mediation har-

monize with our condition and capabilities? Is there anything in it unsuited to us? Does it agree, for instance, with our perfect freedom of moral action? Yes—for everything is to be done by moral suasion. The will, which to coerce is to destroy, is to be persuaded; we are to be “made willing in the day of his power.” Then, is there anything required of us that we are unable to perform? No. We are required to “*repent* ;” and we can be sorry for sin as easily as we can be sorry for any other foolish or injurious thing. We are required to “*believe*” or trust, in Christ; and we can confide in the moral law of his redemption as easily as we can in the great laws of physical and social life. We are required to obey; and which of the commandments transcends our ability? Whether we *will* fulfil these requirements or not, is another thing; but, if we *will*, we *can*. God’s thoughts are precious, then, because so feasible.

V. THE PSALMIST MENTIONS THE NUMBER OF GOD’S THOUGHTS. “How great is the sum of them.” If each be precious, their multiplication, of course, precisely in its proportion, enhances the sum of preciousness. The *purpose* to save was but a single thought, springing from the depths of Infinite love, but the *means* of saving involved a great many thoughts. How many things had to be harmonized, and accomplished, and calculated!—the principles of the Divine government—the principles of man’s moral nature—the influences of Satanic agency—the moral influence of men upon each other—the agencies of Providence—every moral influence, indeed, in the moral universe; for probably there is not one unaffected by the Atonement. How many thoughts, therefore, had to be conceived, and balanced, in devising the mediatorial method of pardoning, sanctifying, and preserving. “Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward,” &c. (Psalm xl. 5.)

But we must stop: we have got into the midst of the great Gospel theme. We hardly know what to leave unsaid

everything pertaining to the Gospel seems to belong here. The Bible often so surprises you, you think you will say a few words on some one single point or other, and you find yourself in the midst of a great cluster of fundamental truths. You never know, when you sink a shaft into Scripture, what sort of a mine you will have to work.

Observe, however, before you adopt David's estimate of God's thoughts, two conditions of it :—

1. He held God's thoughts to be precious, although he could not fully comprehend them all. He had just been confessing that they were "too wonderful for him;" but from what he *did* understand, he prized the rest—held them all precious, every thought that was God's, *because* it was his. There are many of God's thoughts we do not understand :—*Doctrinal* thoughts; the mystery of the Divine existence of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the mystery of the incarnation—"God manifest in the flesh;" the mystery of spiritual regeneration and agency; the mystery of the Divine purposes. Neither you nor I can understand these; they are simply declared to us as facts. Do we hold them precious, *although* they are "too wonderful for us"? Unitarianism does not: it rejects them *because* it cannot understand them.

Disciplinary thoughts, afflictive and mysterious, of which we see neither the reason nor the adaptation—are they precious?

2. David thought them all precious, although some of them were doubtless painful to his human feeling.

"God's thoughts are not as our thoughts;" they oppose our wishes and feelings. Take, for example, *his conditions of salvation*, his demands of utter self-abasement—that we confess our utter sinfulness—our utter demerit—our utter impotence, and take salvation as a gift of his sovereign grace—how humiliating to our self-importance! Or take his method of *spiritual discipline*: we are to "mortify our members," to "crucify the flesh"—how painful to human feeling! Notwithstanding, a good man will deem God's thoughts to be precious—all precious. Sometimes, however,

there will be a special preciousness in his recognition. He will not *always* feel *all* God's thoughts to be *equally* precious; they will be precious according to their special appropriateness. In the *consciousness of guilt*, the precious thought will be that "he delighteth in mercy;" in the deep *sense of pollution*, that "there is a fountain opened, and that the Holy Spirit will cleanse us; in *fierce temptation*, that he knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation;" in *perplexing difficulties*, that "he will direct our path;" in *sore affliction*, that he has "appointed the rod," and that "in all our afflictions, he himself is afflicted," &c. "I know the thoughts that I think towards you, that they are thoughts of peace, and not of evil."

The great practical thing is to get right thoughts of God's thoughts—not to misunderstand them. They are precious only in the degree in which they are understood. Their being misunderstood is the reason why they are not always precious. Thus, a *penitent* man conceives of God's justice as if it were an implacable attribute that would hinder his forgiveness if it could; that has to be appeased in its angry feeling, &c. A *profligate sinner*, again, thinks of God's mercy as an amiable weakness that cannot find in its heart to permit his punishment. A *suffering Christian* thinks of God's chastisements as if they were resentments; and thus men go on misconceiving God's thoughts, and therefore failing to recognise their preciousness.

How, then, are you to show that you deem God's thoughts precious?

1. By your grateful feelings for them. Bless God for giving you his thoughts. Think what the Bible is—a book full of God's thoughts about matters of infinite moment to you. Supposing you had never had the Bible, and that the great problems concerning your origin, being, and destiny—God, moral government, and eternity—were still perplexing the world; and that the only help to their solution that the wise men of the world could bring was "the dark dexterity of guessing well; and that God were to announce his

intention to solve all these problems for you, and on a given day, and at a given place, to give you a book full of his thoughts, written down, telling you everything you wish to know,—how eagerly you would anticipate the day, and hasten to the place! Such a book you have; bless God for it! He might have left you ignorant of his thoughts. Bless God for their favourable character. Had he thought otherwise than he has!

2. By your practical use of them. *Make yourselves acquainted with them*—read God's thoughts. The Bible has fallen into a household commonness; it is regarded as a mere chattel. It should be the directory of your life—"a lamp to your feet," &c. Read it every day: let your motto be, "no day without a line." Treasure up what you find in it.

Do not alter them. Many do this—perhaps most. They will not take God's thoughts as they find them; they want to make them fit some preconceived theology or other, or to prove it. "It is one thing to have the Bible on our side, and another thing to be on the side of the Bible." A *penitent* man alters God's thoughts when he says there is no forgiveness *for him*. A *Christian* man alters God's thoughts when he will not appropriate God's promises.

Act upon them. In the Bible, they are *thoughts*,—only thoughts—the mere plan of the spiritual Architect of the Church. You must realize the plan, give embodiment to the thoughts, make them realities; you must become "living epistles of Christ;" you must incarnate the Gospel salvation. God has thought that you shall be saved if you repent. Then, repent and realize the thought. He has thought that through Christ you may be reconciled to him. Then, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." He has thought that, through your renewal by the Holy Ghost, your reformation, your watchfulness, and your spiritual culture, you may recover the divine image that you have lost. Then, realize this thought, and "perfect your holiness in the fear of the Lord."

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The Genius of the Gospel.

[Able expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are happily not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remark, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.]

SIXTH SECTION.—Matt. iv. 1—11.

Temptation of Christ; or, the Typal Battle of the Good.

ASSUMING that this is not allegory, but narrative—not a mythical representation, but a veritable history—there are three different hypotheses as to the *mode* in which Satan did now, in the solitude of the wilderness, assail the Son of God. One is, that it was in VISION; another, that it was in SUGGESTION; and the other, that it was in a PALPABLE FORM. As our opinion is not the generally received one, we shall present it in the language of one of the most astute thinkers and profound orthodox theologians of this age.

“This is a point,” says Dr. Payne—referring to the *mode*—“of considerable difficulty—the full amount of which does not perhaps, at first sight, appear. It is a point, also, in reference to which different opinions have been formed by men distinguished by judgment and piety. It is therefore, needless to add, that it becomes us to maintain our own with deference and modesty.

“One preliminary remark may help to guide to a right judgment in reference to this point, viz., that the passage, in Matthew, to which we now refer, *is the narrative of a real temptation sustained by the Saviour*. If this remark be well founded—and I see not how its truth can be denied—it must prove fatal, as it appears to me, to one mode of explaining the statements of the evangelist, though it has the sanction of great names for its support. The mode of explanation to which I

allude is the following, viz., that the sacred writer records not an actual event, but describes a scene which was presented to the *fancy* of our Lord, during the hours of sleep, or vision. And, among those who hold this general sentiment, there exists a minor difference of opinion—some supposing that the whole is to be ascribed to the agency of Satan, and others to that of the Spirit of God. The latter imagine, of course, that the design of this illusory representation, seen in sleep or vision, was to exhibit Satan to our Lord as his most powerful opponent, and to ‘pre-figure the difficulties by which this arch-apostate would aim to harass him in the execution of his mediatorial office.’ It was, in fact, a Divine prophetic vision of the temptations by which he was to be assailed in the accomplishment of the work of human redemption.

“Now, according to this view, it is not easy to see how Christ can be said, with any propriety, to have been tempted at all. If the representation, or vision, were from God—as the latter hypothesis supposes—its object must have been to instruct and caution, not to tempt, him, for ‘God tempteth no man.’ And if the representation, or vision, were from Satan, I am at a loss to conceive of anything which might render it proper to designate a mere illusory scene, called up to the mind of our Lord, in sleep, or in a vision—though it should be by diabolical agency—a *temptation*. Nothing can, I apprehend, be a temptation—in the sense in which the word is here used—but a direct inducement to sin, presented to a person in full possession of his ordinary control over all his powers both of body and mind.

“And if the words we are now considering are to be regarded as an inspired record of a real temptation, there are only two opinions which can be formed in reference to the event of which they speak. The *first* is, that the devil presented himself personally and visibly to our Lord; and that the events spoken of in these verses literally happened just as they are described. The *second* is, that there was no personal and visible appearance of the devil to our Lord; that the whole description, which certainly appears to imply this, is to be regarded as a highly figurative mode of representing the suggestion by the tempter of a particular mode of conduct (a mode of commencing his mission), which he earnestly desired the Saviour to adopt, that the purposes of his mission might be defeated—a suggestion brought to the mind of our Lord in the same manner precisely in which his suggestions are conveyed to the minds of Christians generally; so that it may be truly, and with emphasis, said of our Divine Example, as well as Redeemer, that ‘he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.’

“A writer of some celebrity among us seems to regard the first of these hypotheses as scarcely worthy of notice. I have been constrained, by what appears to me overpowering evidence, to adopt it. The writer to whom I have alluded allows, that in the way of suggestion the devil

might urge the Saviour to turn stones into bread; but thinks that the subsequent narrative cannot be thus explained. I submit, however, that the entire narrative must either be taken literally, or figuratively:—that we cannot, with any appearance of consistency even, explain the temptation to turn stones into bread, and to cast himself from a pinnacle of the temple, in two such radically different ways.

“The opinion, thus briefly exhibited, will be more fully unfolded hereafter. In the meantime, it may be expedient to consider the formidable objections that lie in the way of the literal interpretation of the narrative. *First*, it deprives the narrative of practical benefit to us; the Saviour not having, in this case, been tempted like as we are. *Secondly*, we are constrained to ask in what character, or form, or person, must the tempter have appeared? Not in his own proper person, or form,—that would manifestly have defeated the end he had in view. It is impossible to conceive that the Saviour could have listened to him for a moment, or that the temptation, presented by him, as the visible and avowed prince of darkness, would, in fact, have been a temptation at all. The devil must, then, have assumed another character or form—the form of a man, or of an angel of light. But to assume that he has the power of doing this, is to take for granted a point of which we have no proof. Or, conceding that point, it is easy to conceive that the Saviour, after the second temptation especially, could have failed to become aware that he was in the presence of an enemy? And, if so, how can we suppose that he would have permitted himself to be carried by *that enemy*, to the top of a mountain, without ascribing something like a want of caution to him who was, in all respects, an example to us? To imagine, as many have done, that he knew that the suggestions to transform the stones into bread, and to throw himself from a pinnacle of the temple, proceeded from the devil, is only another mode of saying that they were not temptations—not trials of the rectitude of his principles, and his determination to execute the great work entrusted to him, in the manner appointed by the Father. Nothing known to have emanated from that source can have been a *temptation to Him*. His Divine nature presents no difficulty against the supposition that till the third suggestion was presented to him, he was ignorant of the source whence they all emanated. He must, as we have seen, been ignorant of this, or they would not have been *temptations*; and he was ignorant of it in the same manner in which he was ignorant of the day of judgment—that is, *as a man*: for as a man he encountered temptation, and vanquished it. *Thirdly*, if all these difficulties be surmounted, we may add that the temple is said to have been so guarded that it is *scarcely* possible to conceive that the Devil could have conveyed our Lord to the top of it but by a miracle; and *quite* impossible to imagine that he could have shown him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, in *any other way*. And yet we have every reason to

believe that the devil does not possess the power of working miracles; for our Lord invariably appealed to his works, in proof of his Divine mission; but, if diabolical agency be competent to the performance of a miracle, nothing can be more manifest than that a miracle is not of itself sufficient proof that the being who performs it came from God.

“On all these accounts, I am constrained to think that there was not, on this occasion (as we have already said), any visible and personal appearance of the tempter; that the statements of the evangelists are not to be literally understood; that the historian is to be regarded as describing—in that picturesque and dramatic form which is so common with the sacred writers—the suggestion, on the part of the enemy, to the mind of Christ, of certain modes or plans for commencing the great work of his mission—plans of which the devil earnestly desired the adoption, because they would have defeated the object of that mission. This interpretation has the great recommendation of exhibiting our Lord as tempted in the same manner in which his people are tempted; whereas, if the devil appeared in some visible form to the Saviour, *his* temptations and *ours* bear no resemblance to each other; and *his* triumph affords to us no ground of encouragement that we also shall be conquerors in the day of trial. I am well aware that the form of the narrative—that the dialogue which is said to have taken place between our Lord and Satan—and, especially, the statement that the Saviour was carried from one place to another—are regarded by many pious and wise men as insuperable obstacles to the reception of that view of the meaning of the passage which I have attempted to give. At one period I thought so myself. I am now, however, fully convinced that it is safest to regard the whole—as this paper has done—as a highly figurative mode of representing suggestions made by Satan to the mind of our Lord, in the same manner with that in which he conveys suggestions to our minds. The full import, as well as the propriety, of this view of the passage will more fully appear as we unfold.

“The fifth remark relates to the *particular temptations* which the devil presented to our Lord.

“The first was a temptation to the abuse or perversion of the supernatural gifts with which he was endowed: ‘Command,’ said the tempter, ‘that these stones be made bread.’

“The power of working miracles was conferred upon our Lord for the sole purpose of demonstrating the divinity of his mission. To have employed that power, therefore, in providing for his personal wants, or in ministering to his personal aggrandisement, would have been not the use, but the abuse, of it. And yet, when destitute of food—especially when he had remained destitute of it so long, and had no prospect of a speedy supply—there was room for the enquiry, on the part of the *Man* Christ Jesus, whether it might not be allowable to draw upon his mira-

culous power to that extent, at least, that would meet the present exigence. He was seeking preparation of mind for his great work. It was essential to the good of man, and the glory of God, that he should be sustained. Ordinary supplies had failed. Might he not, then, adopt the suggestion, without adding to a perversion of his miraculous power, the sin of mistrusting the providence and care of God; for, since he was in the path of duty, there was sufficient ground for confidence that God, who has promised to his people that their bread shall be given them and their water made sure, would provide necessary supplies, or continue to sustain his bodily frame—as he had done during the previous forty days—without any nourishment at all. He recollected the language of God to Israel of old—language which implies that, when ordinary means fail, he both can and will resort to extraordinary measures for the support of his people; and with this sacred recollection he quenched the fiery darts of the wicked one. He resolved to commit himself into the hands of his Father, and to encounter death, even in one of its most horrible forms, rather than prostitute to private purposes the important trust which, to secure important public ones, he had committed to him.

“The two following suggestions were temptations to proceed in an unauthorized manner in the commencement and prosecution of his mission. Sufficient ground existed for believing that the predicted Messiah would be ‘despised and rejected of men,’ and that the Divine intention—in harmony with the whole of the previous conduct of God—in regard to him, was that the evidence of his Divine mission should be gradually unfolded;—that the sun should not at once burst forth upon the Jews with meridian splendour, but shine more and more unto the perfect day. Human reason, however, might have deemed it probable, or even certain, that the great object of the Saviour’s mission would be far more likely to be secured, if he should appear in the world with the splendour of an earthly monarch, and commence his public ministry with a display of miraculous power so extraordinary as to convince even the most sceptical, were that possible, that he was, indeed, the Messiah, the son of the Blessed!

“The devil endeavoured, accordingly, to insinuate such thoughts and purposes into the Saviour’s mind, and to induce him to act upon them. The first of these two temptations was a vivid suggestion, to the mind of the Saviour, of the powerful impression which would be made upon the mind of the Jews, if he were to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, in the sight of all, and without sustaining any injury. ‘Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him upon a pinnacle of the temple;’ that is, not literally—for I do not imagine that they actually left the wilderness; but the devil conveyed him to a pinnacle of the temple in imagination; he led the Saviour to conceive of himself as there,—and to reflect upon the effect which the act of

casting himself down in their midst would have upon the Jews. And to induce him to act upon this suggestion, *i.e.*, actually to go to the pinnacle and cast himself from it, he quoted a passage of Scripture which seemed to promise him preservation in the adventurous attempt. You may do it with safety, he in effect said, for 'It is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.'

"Now we must not forget that this temptation was of a very insidious nature; for, as it has been justly observed, the Jews, 'from a mistaken interpretation of some of the prophecies concerning Christ, had concluded that he would descend suddenly in visible majesty from the clouds of heaven, and make his first public appearance in the temple of Jerusalem.' His visible descent was probably the sign from heaven which they so frequently demanded from him afterwards, and which they regarded as essential to the attestation of his commission.

"It was not possible for temptation to succeed in the case of our Lord; yet the devil certainly adopted the most effectual means to ensure success by suggesting to him the propriety of thus casting himself from the temple, and giving them the signs they desired. To have done this, however, would have been 'tempting God,' *i.e.*, putting his care, and goodness, and power, to unnecessary—and, therefore, improper—proof. In quoting the words of Scripture, the tempter had omitted the very important clause—He shall keep thee '*in all thy ways*;'—a clause which implies that we have no ground to expect the accomplishment of the promise, except when we are in the path of duty; and since our Lord knew that he had no command to expose himself to such imminent peril, but that, on the contrary, it was the will of the Father that his mission should be commenced in a different manner—he repelled the temptation by another passage of Scripture—a passage which it will be well for us ever to bear in mind—'It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.'

"Baffled in both these attempts, and rendered outrageous by defeat, the devil proceeds to make his last grand assault upon our Lord. He presented to his imagination a seductive representation of the glories of temporal dominion, 'He took him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and glory of them;' that is, as I understand the words—as in the former case—he succeeded, by the aid of those infernal arts which he well knows how to employ, in conveying to his imagination as lively a conception of the splendour, and magnificence, and glory of the world, as he could possibly have possessed, had he actually taken him to the top of a lofty mountain, commanding a view of the whole. In addition to this, he probably also suggested to his mind that the actual possession of all this glory would at once secure for him a cordial reception by the Jews, and render the speedy and universal

extension of the Gospel absolutely certain. And, having thus cautiously endeavoured to kindle the desire of earthly splendour—a desire which there did not seem to be wanting important considerations to excuse, and even to hallow—he ventured at length to disclose the horrible condition on which this glory was to be enjoyed. ‘All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.’ Now, however, had Satan, as he often does, defeated his own purposes; for, as Professor Scott most justly observes, ‘With all the craft, and policy, and natural sagacity which Satan possesses, he is the most foolish, because the most wicked, being in the universe.’ He had dashed conviction into the mind of the Saviour, that all the plans in reference to the commencement and prosecution of his work, which had passed before him, had been presented to his imagination by the enemy of all righteousness; and, therefore, he no longer continued to reason with him. He might have disputed his power to accomplish his promise; but Satan is not to be argued with, but rebuked and fled from. Our Lord accordingly repelled the horrible suggestion of worshipping any created being—and more especially Satan—with the unspeakable disdain which it merits. He said to him, ‘Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, ‘Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.’”

As Christ was “tempted like as we are,” we are not only justified, but required to regard his spiritual conflict in the wilderness as a dramatic illustration of that warfare in which every earnest and good man is engaged; and there are four points of similarity:—*It was a battle in the soul, a battle for dominion, a battle won by faith, and a battle resulting in glory.*

I. IT WAS A BATTLE IN THE SOUL. Whatever notion is adopted concerning the *mode* of Satan’s attack, the fact must be admitted, that the *essence* of the temptation was in the influence exerted upon the mind of the Saviour. Had the seductive statements addressed to him by the great moral adversary fallen merely on his external ear, and then died away with the echo, without entering the soul; or if, moreover, they had entered merely the understanding, and made no impression upon the impulses of action; in either case they could not be considered as temptation. *Temptation implies moral excitement.* Nothing can be a temptation to any man that does not enter the soul, and touch certain suscep-

tibilities there. Hence it is that what is a temptation to one man is not so to another ; and, even to the same man, what is a temptation at one period of his history is frequently never so again. We would assert, therefore, that these Satanic thoughts must have entered the very heart of Jesus, and made some impression there ; that the real conflict was on the arena of his inner soul, between certain impulses which the tempter had awakened. All this is perfectly compatible with the *impeccability* of Christ's nature, and is indeed essential to give virtue to his triumph. There is no sin in the mere *possession* of any thought, but in the *entertainment* that is given to it. There are thoughts that come into the mind involuntarily : these are foreigners, not offspring ; we are their thoroughfare, not their home. If we cherish them they corrupt, and may ruin us, but if we expel them as foes they taint us not. They may, indeed, rather benefit, than harm us, for they increase the strength of our virtue by exercise. It seems to me, indeed, that the *susceptibility* of receiving and feeling improper thoughts is essential alike to moral freedom and to moral *praiseworthiness*. Apostate angels and Adam had it in their innocence, or they would not have fallen. Jesus had it, or his temptation would have no meaning, and his unswerving rectitude no merit.

It may serve to give a deeper and more practical meaning to our Saviour's temptation, by remembering that there are two very distinct elements, or forces, in the constitution of man. These I may designate, for the sake both of brevity and clearness, the *SENSE OF SELF, AND THE SENSE OF GOD ;* *i.e.*, an instinct which stimulates thoughts and purposes about our personal gratification and well-being, and an instinct which awakens deep thoughts and solicitudes concerning the transcendent claims of the *ETERNAL*. Everywhere these twofold forces are seen. They work in every breast. All the doings and institutions of the world may be resolved into one of these. The normal and proper relation of these to each other is that of a *subject* to a *sovereign*. The idea of God should be the monarch idea. It should control all

the sentiments, notions, and desires, ever generated by the *self-consciousness*. The Bible teaches this, and true philosophy declares, that the only way to please self is to please God. Now, to disturb the order of these primitive impulses—to bring them into opposition, and to reverse their relative position—is the aim and work of Satan. Any circumstance so brought to bear upon the self-sense as to excite it to an undue influence in the soul is a temptation, and nothing else.

Now, this is truly what Satan here attempts with Christ. He appeals respectively to three instincts in the *self-sense*, in order to dethrone and prostrate the sovereign idea of duty and God. These instincts are *appetite*, *ambition*, and *avarice*. Perhaps the apostle referred to these three self-impulses under the terms “lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.”

The first impulse—*appetite*, or desire for food—although seated in our mere animal nature, is the most powerful of all. It is a craving of the physical nature, not merely for gratification, but for life. Our mortal existence depends upon it. Hunger moves the world. It not only forces the body to toil and sweat “from dewy morn to shady eve,” but presses intellect into its service, and makes even genius a drudge. Far am I from regarding this appetite as an evil; it is a necessary stimulus to intellectual development and moral culture. Without it the world would go to sleep, and souls would remain embryos for ever. Now, it was through this appetite that Satan first assailed Christ. He was “an hungered.” He felt those painful and gnawing cravings of nature which have often induced men to break through restrictions the most sacred, trample upon rights the most divine, and commit crimes the most enormous. His case seems to stand thus:—He had the *power* to convert stones into bread, but not the *right*. There was some reason—I know not what, nor is it of practical importance to determine—which would make it wrong for him thus to use his miraculous might. He wanted bread, and he could get

it at once—get it by a volition. There was nothing in the way but a *moral idea*; and the suggestion of the tempter was, in effect, to give up that *idea* for *bread*. The conflict in the Saviour's mind was between the pinching sense of hunger, and the high sense of right.

The second impulse—namely, *ambition*—is equally universal, if not as powerful, as the former. The principle is really a desire for display, and it is native. It is seen in the first dawnings of intellect; it appears without disguise in the boasting lisp of infancy, and those little proudful feats which childhood often performs to win the applauding smile of the playfellow or the nurse. The adult world abounds with its developments. A love of self-exhibition can be often detected by a keen eye under the garb of apparently the most *genuine* humility. Plebeians as well as princes have their stage for self-manifestation; and those who lack the nerve or talent to appear before the great public, will be found endeavouring to spread out, for the best *effect*, their powers or circumstances in their own little sphere. Each seeks a circle, however small, where he can play the hero. This principle, indeed, like every other power of our nature, has been sadly abused, and has ever been the *occasion* of serious evils. It puts a false face on society, tacks a polished veneer over rotten wood, spreads gold tinsel over common brass, robes falsehood and selfishness in the attire of truth and grace, and induces men to labour and lie, scheme and cheat, in order “to keep up appearances.” Most of the horrors of war may be traced to it. Still, in itself, and in its intention, it is a great good. It was intended to induce men to show forth the glory of God; as do the heavens and the earth, by showing forth the noble nature that he has given; and to promote social concord and peace, by prompting men to cultivate those attributes which they are made mutually to love and admire.

“Thirst for applause calls public judgment in
To praise our own.”

Now, Christ, having humanity, had this principle, and this principle Satan seeks next to appeal to. He was now entering on his public mission, and, in the lonely desert, dwelling unquestionably in thought upon the probabilities of his treatment by the Jews. As a man, it was perfectly natural for him to desire to make a favourable impression of himself upon the minds of those amongst whom he had to live and labour. Were he to enter their metropolis, go to their holy sanctuary, ascend the highest roof, and cast himself down into their midst, the probability would be that they would be impressed with his greatness, and receive him as their Messiah, whom their prophets represented as "coming in the clouds." This was the suggestion. "Then the devil taketh him into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." The conflicting question, it seems to me, was this:—Shall I go amongst the Jews in my present humble appearance, which will expose me to their contempt and ridicule? or shall I, by a miracle, which I can easily perform, at the outset, manifest my greatness before them, and so gain their favour?" Here, again, the battle in the Saviour's mind is between a native impulse in the sense of self, and an *idea* of duty starting from the *sense* of God.

The third impulse—namely, *avarice*, or desire for possession—is no feeble instinct of our nature. It is seen as truly in the child that seeks to add to its stock of toys, as in the merchant that navigates oceans, and traverses continents in search of gain. Civilization has nursed this instinct into a passion—an autocratic passion, pressing every power into its service, and bowing every agent to its iron will. It has thus become a serious evil amongst us. It supplies weights and measures for everything. It determines the worth of man and of truth. The purseless saint,

however great his soul, is nothing. The sublimest truths are visionary speculations unless they are promotive of wealth. It has polarized all things. The heart of the civilized world points to the golden mountains. Still, as an instinct, it is good and useful: it serves to develop the treasures both of earth and soul. Now, this instinct for *possession* was appealed to in Christ. All the kingdoms of the world were offered to him if he would but surrender to evil. Christ could have taken possession of Palestine—yes, and the world—but there was some reason or *idea* of *duty* to prevent.

Through these impulses, then, belonging to the self-sense of our nature, Satan assailed Christ, and endeavoured to subvert his high sense of duty and God; and thus he acts now. Hence, in *all points, he was tempted as we are*; for is it not now through *appetite, ambition, and avarice*, that the arch-enemy assaults us? Is it not through one of these gates he enters the spiritual dominion, and dethrones the rightful sovereign, and rifles us of our moral possessions? Does he not now enter the soul through *hunger*? Verily, the experience of ages teaches the lesson we are slow to learn, that so close is the connexion between poverty and vice, that he who would improve the moral condition of the lower classes must carry bread with him as well as the Bible. Diabolos is never more potent than when he appears in the grim and ghastly form of hunger. The bitter gnawings of want often destroy the strongest citadels of virtue. How often, too, does he captivate the aspiring when he appeals to their *ambition*, by suggesting means of glory and distinction which will arrest the attention and command the plaudits of the vulgar? His form is fascinating, and his wand is mighty, as he stands before them, and points to scenes where they can “make a show,” and play a conspicuous part. He is the god of fashion. Nor is he less potent when he appeals to *avarice*, by pointing men to large possessions. Here, without exaggeration, he commands the energies, and wields a sovereignty over a large portion of the mercantile

world. He stimulates the all-consecrating labour, suggests the falsehoods, and coins the tricks, of business.

But there is one circumstance which seems to me to have given a *peculiar* force to the temptation of Christ :—*He had the power to do and to get all that was suggested to him through these impulses.* The motive to any effort is always weak in proportion to the *doubt* that may exist as to success. In most cases, when any sinful course is suggested to men, there comes this counteracting doubt. Is the man “an hungred,” and is theft suggested to meet the cravings of nature ? The motive will be weak in proportion to the improbability of success. The same is true in relation to the other impulse. Whilst all men may desire power and wealth, all do not venture on the same course of falsehood and chicanery in order to realize them, because of the *doubt* of success. We thank God for this doubt. It is a check to sin, it weakens temptation, it is a bridle on the demon passions of humanity. Give all men the power of getting their wishes, and our world becomes forthwith a pandemonium. Now, Jesus had this power ; he had no doubt about success. He could turn stones into bread by a volition ; he could fall from the balustrade of the temple, and rise unhurt, amid the shouts of the multitude ; he could take possession of all the kingdoms of the world in a moment. Oh ! this capacity of certain success must have given a fearful and unparalleled power to his temptation ! But he stood ; the *idea* of duty and God triumphed over the meaner impulses of gratification and self.

(*To be continued.*)

Glances at some of the Great Preachers of England.

No. I.—HUGH LATIMER.

WE propose, now and then—if possible, at regular intervals—to give, as the title indicates, brief glances at some of the masters of our Israel—at those good and great men, each of whom deserves the truly honourable appellation, “a prince of preachers.” The nature of our scheme is after this sort.—We think of giving a *very* slight biographical sketch of the preacher we have in hand, but chiefly to occupy the allotted space with those extracts from his sermons which seem to us worthy of being read and remembered.

We are not without hope that this part of our periodical will prove interesting and instructive to its readers. There is much admiring speech concerning the wonders of Persepolis and Nineveh. Men are ready, and justly, to cover Layard with laurels for his noble efforts to exhume the long-buried cities of the East: and we are not without hope that we shall deserve some small meed of praise for bringing to the light a few of those mental treasures which English sermons contain, and which, to say the least, are as worthy of our notice and study as the “winged bulls” and sculptured slabs of ancient Babylonia.

But here one word of kind and hopeful advice concerning our *extracts* to those of our readers who are engaged in “public speaking.” They will be given not as models for imitation, but as *suggestive* materials, and as specimens of truly excellent thinking. A mere imitation of another man’s thoughts, and repetition of another man’s words, are very likely to call forth only mistrust, censure, and contempt. “Where is the animal,” said the ape, “that I can’t imitate?” “And where is the animal,” said the fox, “that will imitate *thee*?” So much for the poem: proceed we

now to our work; and let us take a "glance," by way of beginning, at "honest" Hugh Latimer, "the father of all those" who, since the Reformation, have given themselves to the preaching and publishing of sermons in our noble mother-tongue.

Biographical Sketch.

Leicestershire was the native county of Latimer. He first saw the light in the reign of the fourth Edward, in the year 1470. Concerning his parentage and domestic circumstances, he tells Edward VI. and his court (Sermon V., London edition, 1787), in his own good style, "That upon a farm of four pounds a year at the utmost, his father tilled as much ground as kept half a dozen men; that he had it stocked with a hundred sheep and thirty cows; that he found the king a man and a horse, himself remembering to have buckled on his father's harness (armour) when he went to Blackheath; that he gave his daughters five pounds a piece at marriage; that he lived hospitably among his neighbours, and was not backward in his alms to the poor." He was sent to, and acquitted himself well at, the grammar schools of his native place and of Leicester, and, in 1488, went to Cambridge. From early youth he appears to have been pious, at least according to the measure of light he possessed, for he was certainly a very zealous Papist. The preaching of Bilney was the means of opening his eyes to the blessings of purer faith, and henceforth he became a zealous Protestant, and a powerful, popular preacher of the reformed religion. In 1535 he was made Bishop of Worcester by Henry the Eighth, having been, for some time before, chaplain to Anne Boleyn; but his bishopric was no bed of roses, for the worthy monarch who gave him his mitre conferred upon him, in the course of time, an imprisonment of six years in the Tower. It was sunshine with him during the short reign of Edward the Sixth, of which promising, but perhaps, *over-praised*, youthful prince he was a prudent adviser and a favourite preacher. With Queen

Mary came in dark days for England, and a violent death for poor Latimer. Oxford had the honour of burning him and Ridley. They suffered in front of Baliol College, and died in a right noble mode. "*Fidelus est Deus.*" "I thank God most heartily that he hath prolonged my life to this end, that I may glorify God by this kind of death." "Brother, we shall this day light such a candle in England as shall never be put out." Such were the dying utterances of this brave soldier of "the noble army of martyrs." Truly, "the blood of martyrs *is* the seed of the Church."

We have not space to attempt any lengthened *critique* of Latimer's mental capacity or moral character. He was not a great man, in the usual sense of the word; he did not possess the gorgeous imagination of Taylor, nor the logical acuteness of Barrow, nor the sublime, serene intellect of Howe, nor the persuasive power and pathos of Baxter; but he possessed *considerable* mental force, moral rectitude of the noblest order, and a spiritual earnestness which has not often been surpassed. We will now select a few passages from his writings to illustrate the following prominent features of his character:—

1. The clearness of his evangelical views:—"Now, if I should preach in the country, among the unlearned, I would tell what propitiatory, expiatory, and remissory, is; but here is a learned auditory. But for them that be unlearned, I will expound it. Propitiatory, expiatory, remissory, or satisfactory, signify all one thing in effect, and is nothing else but a thing whereby to obtain remission of sins, and to have salvation. And this way the devil useth to make void the death of Christ, that we might have affiance in other things, as the sacrifice of the priest; whereas Christ would have us to trust only in his sacrifice. So he was 'the Lamb which hath been slain from the beginning of the world;' and, therefore, he is called 'a continual sacrifice,' and not for the continuance of the mass, as I myself once took it to be: but the Scripture saith, 'by himself,' and by none other, Christ made purgation and satisfaction 'for the

whole world.'”—(Sermon IV., p. 84 : see also Sermon XI., p. 226.)

2. His zeal as a preacher:—"I came once myself to a place, riding on a journey homeward from London, and I sent word, over-night, into a town that I would preach there in the morning, because it was holiday, and methought it was an holiday's work. The church stood in the way, and I took my horse and my company, and bent thither. I thought I should have found a great company in the church, and when I came there the church door was fast locked. I tarried there half an hour and more. At last the key was found; and one of the parish comes to me, and said, 'Sir, this is a busy day with us; we cannot hear you. It is Robin Hood's day. The parish are gone abroad to gather for Robin Hood; I pray you hinder them not.' . . . It is no laughing matter, my friends; it is a weeping matter, a heavy matter. Under the pretence of gathering for Robin Hood, a traitor and a thief, to put out a preacher; to have his office less esteemed; to prefer Robin Hood before the ministration of God's word."—(Sermon X., p. 201.)

3. His bold exposure of the faults of the great:—

Bishops:—"I heard a Bishop of England that went on visitation; and as it was the custom, when the bishop should come, to be rung into the town, the great bell's clapper was fallen down, the tyall was broken, so that the bishop could not be rung into the town. There was a great matter made of this; and the chief of the parish was much blamed for it in the visitation. The bishop was somewhat quick with them, and signified that he was much offended. They made their answer, and excused themselves as well as they could. 'It was a chance,' said they, 'that the clapper brake, and we could not get it mended yet: we must tarry till we can have it done. It shall be mended as shortly as may be.'

"Among the others there was one wiser than the rest; and he came to the bishop. 'Why, my lord,' saith he, 'doth your lordship make so great a matter of the bell that

lacketh his clapper? Here is a bell,' saith he, and pointed to the pulpit, 'that hath lacked a clapper this twenty years. We have a parson that fetched out of his benefice fifty pounds every year, but we never see him.' I warrant you the bishop was an unpreaching prelate. He could find fault with the bell that wanted a clapper, to bring him into the town, but he could not find any fault with the parson that preached not at his benefice."—(Sermon X., p. 200.)

Judges:—"Thou land of Jerusalem, thy magistrates, thy judges, are unfaithful.' They will talk of many gay things; they will pretend to this and that, but they will keep no promise: they be worse than unfaithful. He was not afraid to call the officers unfaithful, and the 'fellows of thieves;' for thieves and thieves' fellows be all of one sort. . . . He calleth princes thieves! What!—princes thieves! What a seditious varlet was this! Was he worthy to live in a commonwealth that would call princes, in this wise, fellows of thieves. Had they a standing on Shooter's Hill, or Standgate hole, to take a purse? Why, did they stand by the highway-side? Did they rob or break open any man's house or door? No, no; that is a poor kind of thieving; they were princes: they had a prince-like kind of thieving. 'They all love bribes.' Bribery is a princely kind of thieving."—(Sermon VII., p. 134.)

"Cambyses was a great king; such another as our master is. He had many land-deputies, land-presidents, and lieutenants under him. It is a great while ago since I read the history. It chanced he had under him, in one of his dominions, a briber, a gift-taker, a gratifier of rich men. As the old saying is, 'Happy is the child whose father goes to the devil.' The cry of the poor widow came to the emperor's ear, and caused him to flay the judge quick, and laid his skin in his chair of judgment, that all judges that should give judgment afterwards should sit in the same chair. Surely it was a goodly sign, a goodly monument, the sign of the judge's skin. I pray God we may once see the sign of the skin in England."—(Sermon VII., p. 142.) J. H.

Theological and Pulpit Literature.

SCHLEIERMACHER.*

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE HOMILIST."

SIR,—You will sympathize with me, I am sure, when I tell you that I find a great difficulty in understanding some philosophical works of a theological character, which are highly recommended by many of our literary *savans*. I am very much concerned to make myself master of any work professing to enter into the real essence of theology, as I am about to commence a course of usefulness in an important sphere of pulpit ministrations. I feel that I am bound to cultivate my powers in such a manner as to remove, to the extent of my capacity and opportunity, the charge which is often made against the pulpit of the present day, that it is behind the press, the platform, the bar, and the senate, in terseness and force of language, in individual earnestness and enthusiasm, requisite to the carrying into effect the practical business of religion. I can scarcely say that the charge is altogether unfounded. There is an ascetic notion widely prevalent that the solemnity and importance of religion require a calm coolness of manner in its public advocate. In nothing else but in religion would mankind suffer such weak, vapid declamation: such a monotonous rehearsal of mere technical phraseologies. A solemn statue would answer the same purpose. This is not only endured, but demanded, by audiences trained to unmeaning genuflections, and to a studied vacant gaze upon the innocent, inoffensive pulpit official. Under such circumstances, it is no wonder that an earnest enthusiasm is denounced as obtrusive, and devoid of the gravity of cold wisdom; it is too real, individual, and earnest, for the artistic devotion of our modern congregations. All this is tenaciously defended as indis-

* "Brief Outline of the Study of Theology," by Dr. Schleiermacher.

pensable to what is called the respectability and dignity of religion ; and yet we hear nothing more frequently than the wail of churches, in view of the manifest inefficiency of modern sermonizing, either for congregational attraction, or for individual conversions. Innumerable are the circumstantial expedients of the pastorate to render the inane and vapid effusions of the pulpit at all endurable. Who would read popular sermons to get ideas? Who, as a general rule, would fatigue his eyes in running over continents of words to get a few seeds of rich, suggestive thinking? There are, it is true, discourses whose authors are independent thinkers, and who soar above the fear of those petty critics who have gained their importance by means of the privileged obscurity of reviews.

Looking at this state of things, I hail, in my productions, the appearance of fresh thought and vigorous expression. I love individual freedom of thinking. It brings out human nature in its native variety. It is life as contrasted with the dead uniformity of conventional habits, and the novelty of it generates the spirit of forgiveness towards many erratic gyrations even in theological sentiment.

German theology *seems* to be the very *desideratum* of the age, if a novel mode of thinking and speaking is what we want. To Germanise our ideas might lead to vigorous thinking, on the same principle that crossing the species and the soil promotes a vigorous fruitfulness in the physical world.

Schleiermacher's theology is so strange that it *seems* to be the very thing for a person in my position. It is so different from the technical theologies of the sixteenth century that one feels as if he breathed in a new atmosphere, after passing through the wilderness of "covenants," "doctrines," "uses," "applications," "inferences," "conclusions," &c., of the old school. I do not forget that thought is thought, be it ancient or modern, dressed up in the technics of orthodoxy, or in some newly-coined terminology. The same is the fact with regard to truth. A novel mode of expression has no more truth in it, necessarily, than an old one.

This latter thought has been suggested to my mind strongly in reading Schleiermacher's theology. I take the rule given by him, and others of the German school, to test everything by my own "subjectivity;" and if my inner eye is my best criterion, independent of what is called "objective" argument, then I fear that after all the freshness which is, *apparently*, in Schleiermacher's mode of expression, I must conclude it is only the novelty of a thick fog of words covering a very barren field of common-place thought. If the teaching of one's own subjectivity—the mere instinct of a man's thought—be the best guide into truth, then I claim the superiority of my own to *me* above all others. And I really do evolve my "subjectivity" when I say, that the theology of Schleiermacher may be characterised by the illustration of a young woman, who went into a shop, and asked for "a semi-perforated truncated cone, convex at the top," but was obliged to use the more familiar name of a "thimble" before the unlearned shopkeeper could know what she meant.

The great names attached to the work form an objective presumption in its favour—Dr. Frederick Lucke and William Farrer, LL.B. It is also dedicated to one whose name I write with reverence, J. P. Smith, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.

I give you a specimen of the fog of this work:—

"A positive science is, in general, a body of scientific elements, which have a connectedness of their own; not as if, by a *necessity*—arising out of the very *idea* of science—they formed a constituent part of the scientific organization, but only so far as they are requisite in order to the solution of a *practical problem*. If, on the other hand, a rational theology has, in past times, been exhibited as an essential *part* of the scientific organization, it is true that this also has reference to the God of our God-consciousness; yet, being a *speculative* science, it is altogether a different thing from the theology with which we have to do."

Can any one be sure what is the real meaning of the author in the above paragraph? Does it not appear that

any thought may be applied to the words? Or does it not appear, rather, that a rational thought could never suit such words? I will suppose that the first part of the quotation—extending to the word “problem”—means, that not only are the elements of a science connected with one another, but that, in any one science, there are certain specific elements arising out of the nature of the thing necessary to solve any *practical* problem in that science:—the problems of astronomy, for instance. If so, can any one see how the latter part of the paragraph contains anything on “*the other hand*,” to this? How could a “*rational theology*,” at any time, form an essential *part* of the “*scientific organization*,” if *theology* is a science, as he says it is? What can be that scientific organization which has, in past “times,” included “*rational theology*”? Is the meaning this—that the science of theology *includes* the science of theology? What is the antecedent of “*the scientific organization*”? Is there a *scientific* theology which is not “*speculative*”? Does he mean, by theology, a church organization, or an organized church, in its relationship to God? One would suppose that this was his meaning, by consulting other parts of the work. Then, why did he not say that he was going to change the meaning of the term theology as it is commonly used, instead of introducing it as merely “a theology with which we have to do”? He should have given us a new vocabulary. Any man who gives his own peculiar meaning to any term does more to mystify thought than by introducing a new term from a foreign tongue.

Your limits and my patience will scarcely allow the introduction of more quotations in this epistle. Any one who wishes to have the pleasure of viewing specimens such as I have given, may see them in abundance by dipping into the work in question.

Yours, &c.,

P.

WELLINGTON AND THE PULPIT.*

THE pulpit, as exhibited in connexion with the death of the Hero of Waterloo, has awakened in many minds the conviction that it is sadly deficient in spiritual insight, purpose, and power. We have read a good many of its published effusions on the "grand occasion," and the only ones we consider worthy of notice are those we have placed at the foot of this page. It is not our intention to remark on any particular sermon, either in the way of censure or commendation, but faithfully to give the impression which the whole has made on our minds in relation to the pulpit; and then, according to the measure of our space, submit an extract from each of the discourses we have undertaken to notice, and thus enable each author to speak for himself.

The Wellington Sermons have impressed us with the fact that the English pulpit is not up to the true Christian ideal; that it is rather a conventional than a New Testament organ; that its utterances are more the echoes of the notions that float on the surface of British society than the living expressions of that broad heart-searching and philosophic morality which is the essence of Christianity, and which is compendiously embodied in the Divine Sermon on the Mount. Taking the average sermonic literature of the subject in hand as our guide, we should unhesitatingly pronounce the British pulpit to be deficient in two important things:—

First, in mental independency. The moral sentiments of the discourses, for the most part, are identical with those which occupied every department of the worldly press before they were preached. Abstract those *pietizings*, *spiritualizings*, and biblical quotations, which people are wont to look for

* 1. "Wellington," &c., by T. Binney; 2. "Wellington and War," by Newman Hall, B.A.; 3. "The Life of Wellington; its Lessons to Young Men," by Rev. W. Forster; 4. "Duty and Destiny," by G. W. Couder; 5. "Diversities of Glory," by George Palmer Davies, B.A.

in the sermons of their ministers, and what in relation to Divine ethnology—the thing for which the pulpit is specially appointed to explain and enforce—have you left that I cannot discover even in the newspaper of the sceptic? Are the views of man, the standard of right, and the ideas of greatness promulgated by Christianity, identical with those which our political journals advocate, and our people applaud? We trow not, and therefore consider the pulpit recreant to its mission in not prominently setting forth the contrary and Christian ideas, in order to enlighten the Pagan excitement and the feigned sorrow of the hour. In this, as in many other public questions, it is evidently not the leader, but the led. It has no individual voice sounding more clear, full, and manly, than others. Although the eager seizing upon subjects upon which the public mind is excited in many cases savours of a miserable *clap-trap* to increase the congregation, and to “produce an effect,” it might, nevertheless, be turned to good account. Anyhow, the preacher, at such seasons, should pray for either grace to be silent, or to form and express individual biblical convictions. Moreover, the wonderful correspondence between the sermons in question indicates the want of mental independency. With a few honourable exceptions, they all chime in with the popular ideas of the hour. Their eloquence is all in the same key-note, the key-note struck at first by the “*Times*.” They all declare the nation to be in sorrow, although the people have failed to see a tear or hear a sigh; they all speak in lofty strains of the greatness of their hero, without explaining what true greatness is; they all have a piece of eloquent declamation against war, yet assume its necessity, as if it had never been questioned; they all laud, in no measured terms, the warrior; and, what is lamentably worse, they all breathe that *adulating* spirit which ever marks the want of true mental independency.

But these Wellington Sermons show that the pulpit, secondly, *lacks philosophic discrimination* as well as mental independency. We discover nothing like what such a subject

imperiously demanded—a strict inquiry into the laws of human greatness, and the essential elements of a noble character. The pulpit, in this case especially, should have wielded that faculty of analysis which works like a “two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” We should like to have seen this analytic sword gleam in the pulpits where these sermons were preached, cutting off from the character of Wellington all that was functional and adventitious, and enabling men to look at his sheer humanity in the broad light of biblical truth. As we hope to resume this subject again, and our space at present is so limited, we can only give two out of many instances of the lack of this discriminative faculty. The first is that of mistaking *duty* for virtue. In nearly all the sermons, the assumption—or, if you like, the fact—that the Duke made DUTY the guiding pillar of his life, uplifts the preacher to the heights of panegyric eloquence. The word *duty* here must either mean the mere *sense* of duty, or the practical out-working of this sense. Now, there is no moral virtue necessarily implied in either. The former is a constituent element of our nature, and there is no more merit in its possession than there is in the possession of any other native sense or organ; and as to the latter, whilst there is no virtue without, it is not virtue. It may be a crime. The poor Hindoo widow who immolates herself on the funeral-pyre of her husband, the bloody persecutors of the Papal “Inquisition” and the Protestant “Star Chamber”—Bonner, Laud, Jeffreys, and such loathable monsters—are all virtuous and great, if the carrying out of a mere sense of duty could make them so. Some of the greatest enormities recorded in history were perpetrated in the sacred name of *duty*. In our day, it is often the plea for much that is ungenerous and unjust. Two things are necessary to make “duty” a virtue: *it should have a right standard and a right motive*. The standard should not be human expediency, not public opinion, not the *royal pleasure*,

but the *will* of God ; and the motive should be, not servile fear, nor selfish hope, but *disinterested* love. The other example of deficient discrimination we shall cite is, the *mistaking of functional cleverness for human greatness*. A man may be a good shoemaker, butcher, physician, lawyer, statesman, courtier, warrior, and yet a bad man ; and when a bad man has a bad office—which is conceivable—his dexterousness and success in the office will but heighten his **BADNESS**.

Now for our extracts. No. 1 is from a discourse containing many fine thoughts well expressed. This extract puts warriors in the same category with hangmen :—

“ When foreign criminals are to be put to death, there is a necessity for somebody to do it, just as somebody else is needed when domestic criminals are to be executed at home. Of course, it is to be admitted that the one thing demands more of talent and skill than the other, and that it may defend and preserve more than is endangered by the forcible invasion of a house by a burglar ; but the real object of a perfectly just war is of the same nature with the punishment of proposed or actual murderers. The field of battle is the place of execution ; the soldier is the executioner ;—the difference between him and another functionary being, that his duties include those of the police ;—that he needs sagacity and courage to capture the criminal, as well as skill and strength to inflict the blow ;—and that he must be willing to risk being the subject of destruction instead of the agent.”

If hangmen belong to the same class, why should they not have the same national honour ?

The next extract is from No. 2, a discourse we admire because of its independent convictions. It breathes the Gospel morality, and makes the subject tell in the right direction :—

“ Men speak in glowing phrase of the triumphs of British arms in the last great war ; but never let us forget the miseries which it entailed. If we look at the expenditure, we find that the war with France cost more than a thousand millions of money ; and that out of about fifty millions of annual taxation, only six millions are required for the civil government of the country, including the maintenance of the dignity of the crown, the whole of the rest being consumed by our war establishments, and the interest of the war debt. Contrasting what war has cost during the fifty years ending in 1850, with the money expended in missionary operations, we find that the incomes, during that period, of

the Bible Society, the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the London, the Baptist, the Wesleyan, the Church of England, the Moravian, the Home, the Colonial, the Irish Evangelical, and the City of London, Missionary Societies, amounted altogether to fourteen and a half millions, for saving the lives and souls of men; while, during the same period, no less than twelve hundred millions were spent in destroying life and property by fire and swords in war."

The next extract is from No. 3, a thoughtful and very eloquent discourse, but rather MARS-LIKE in some of its strokes:—

"He who is self-reliant makes the very best of his own energies and opportunities. He does not refuse the help of other people; still, it is not that he may live in idleness. He does not work by proxy. He is himself an earnest labourer, however numerous those may be who may labour with him, or under him. Work with him is a sort of worship. He puts himself into it. It is the way in which he gets his own invisible self manifested. Such a man does not wait on circumstances, but fashions them to his ends. He does not stay until the stream has run by, but he makes it float him across its bosom."

The next is from No. 4, a discourse abounding with noble and well-put thought:—

"But what are the great educators of the world—those who insensibly mould us, or to which we resort for influence upon our own or others' lives? Are they moral maxims, wise sayings, proverbs, and 'saws'? Is it not rather example? These axioms and maxims, proverbs and precepts, are but the instruments by which we clench the truths which example has driven into the mind. They are the labels which we affix to the illustrated lessons—the pictures and the models. At all events, we none of us *begin* to live by principles. These may come afterwards to be our sufficient instructors, but I much doubt whether one in a hundred men has ever adopted a *principle* of life until some signal *example* of it has convinced him of its worth."

The next is from No. 5, a production which has the blush of a healthy youth, and the promise of a vigorous manhood:—

"The student may be a cold sceptic, the statesman a heartless atheist, the general a licentious profligate; here there is no necessary growth and grandeur of the whole being; but in the Church, he only can be a leader who, in addition to strength of intellect, and energy of purpose, and courage in action, has his moral principles and religious affections attuned to sweet harmony with the wills and purposes of Almighty God."



A HOMILY

ON

Anti-Theism in Relation to the Intuitions of Humanity.

(Continued from page 16, No. IX.)

"My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."—PSALM lxxxiv. 2.

HITHERTO we have acted the part of the Historian in relation to Anti-theism. We have neither assumed the character of the philosopher nor the rhetorician: we have neither reasoned nor declaimed; we have studiously suppressed the thoughts which the subject has suggested, and the emotions it has roused; we have endeavoured, with the utmost brevity and fairness, to sketch the forms it has successively taken in distant ages, and in different lands; to evoke from "Old Time's abyss" all the logical incarnations with which it has stalked through the earth. We confess to disappointment at the result. We expected that some of its forms would rise as sublime figures on our mental horizon, tending to overawe us with their argumentative grandeur, and to charm us with their æsthetic beauty: but, in sooth, they appeared to us more like crawling reptiles or fantastic butterflies than those angel-figures of light and loveliness which error is wont to assume.

As the preceding homily is to be the text of the present, the propriety and bearing of the observations we are about to submit can only be fully appreciated by those who have made themselves acquainted with "the historic forms of anti-

theism." Now, there are two tribunals before which we may arraign this anti-theism, in order to test the allegations of imposture and falsehood which are brought against it—**LOGIC and INTUITION.**

These are not imaginary authorities in the human soul. We are all conscious of two adjudicating powers: the one reaching its conclusions by the tardy and systematic process of reasoning, and the other coming to it by a spontaneous and rapid impulse. "Truths," says one whom science has ranked amongst the first thinkers of the day, "are known to us in two ways: some are known directly and of themselves, and others through the medium of other truths. The former are the subject of intuition or consciousness, the latter of inference. The truths known by intuition are the original premises from which all others are inferred. Our assent to the conclusion being grounded on the truth of the premises, we never could arrive at any knowledge of reasoning unless something could be known antecedently to all reasoning." * The question, which of these courts is the more competent to try the anti-theistic hypothesis, is one that theology has most unaccountably neglected. It has not even mooted it. It has invariably delivered it up to the exclusive adjudication of logic. Now, if it could be made out—what certainly the history of the trial and the nature of the case will suggest—that the subject transcends all logic, lies beyond its province and its ken, one might get, from the mistakes of past theologers, a caution to the present, and a warning to the future. Without venturing, however, at this time, upon anything like a formal discussion of the subject, we cannot forbear remarking, by the way, that the historic forms of anti-theism now lying before us manifestly indicate both the *power* and *weakness* of logic on this point.

The power of logic is seen in its capacity for refutation. Reason, for instance, could soon take off the princely garb of philosophy which some of these theories have assumed, and

* John Stuart Mill's "System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive," vol. i., p. 5.

exposed their pauperistic state—rive the foundations of their sophistical superstructures, and reduce them to ruins. It could clearly show two things, which would manifestly be a triumphant confutation:—First. That each theory violates the fundamental laws of reasoning. *False premises can never lead to true conclusions.* This is a primary principle in argumentation. Now, it could be shown that, whilst the ancients, ignorant of the inductive method, drew their inferences from fancies, and not facts, the moderns have built their conclusions upon assumptions, formed either from a reckless disregard to facts, or from too circumscribed an observation. Secondly, Logic could show that each theory involves the *theistic* idea; that even granting the validity of the reasoning of all their respective conclusions, they involve, as far as they go, the God-idea. Anti-theists, as we have seen, being all ETERNALISTS, either *absolute* or *partial*, they all believe in an *entily*, which preceded and produced the mechanism and phenomena of the universe. That *eternal entily*, call it what you will—*arché, physis, substance, nature, order, law*, or whatever else, since it is before all, greater than all, independent of all, existing through all—is our God. “It is,” says an eminent writer whom we have before quoted, “rather the word of God which is suppressed than the existence of a deity—kept out of sight, far less disproved; and they are thus self-deceptions, which ought never to have deceived those who have been so carelessly misled by them.”* It must then, we think, appear obvious that logic could easily do these two things in relation to anti-theism, and, consequently, that it has a power to give it a triumphant refutation. We confess, however, that we have no very high idea of such a victory after all. The enemy is so feeble, that his downfall does not imply much prowess on the side of the conqueror. There is not much heroism displayed in crushing a fly. Were we to use the little argumentative power which heaven has kindly vouchsafed to us, in any lengthened and formal discussion

*M'Culloch, vol. i., p. 69.

of the dreamy hypotheses and sophistical conclusions before us, we should have the painful consciousness of being engaged in one of those sham-fights in theology which, whilst they have frequently brought a little popular fame to the victorious belligerent, have not a little disgraced his cause.

But whilst the power of logic is seen in its capacity for the refutation of anti-theism, *its weakness is seen in its incompetency to convince its abettors in the Divine existence.* There are two circumstances suggested as illustrating its incapacity for conviction. One is, that belief in God is anterior to logic. It precedes all reasoning. It is not a thing worked into the soul by argument; it is inbred; it is one of the primitive, universal, and deepest faiths of humanity. And the other is, that disbelief in a God is always defended by logic, such as it is. On the side of atheism, the speculative faculty does everything, the moral nothing. The understanding suppresses the consciousness, fabricates theories, and invents syllogisms. Indeed, whilst my faith in the greatest realities is not grounded on reasoning, nor can ever be destroyed by it, it has, nevertheless, often been made to appear false by its deductions. I believe in my personal existence, and in the existence of an objective world, though reason is not only logically incapable to prove the facts, but offers many plausible arguments against them. I do not know of a theistic argument which a shrewd and intelligent atheist could not refute.*

From all this, I am not disposed to try this question by logic. I am not inclined to enter into a controversy with man on the being of God. It is not an open question to me

* There are five species of argument for God—the *ontological*, *cosmological*, *historical*, *ethological*, and *teleological*. The first reasons from the possibility of his existence; the second, from the contingencies of the universe; the third, from the prevalent sentiments of humanity; the fourth, from the existence of a moral system, with which man is associated; and the fifth, from the evidences of design everywhere impressed upon creation. It would be easy to show that all these arguments are based upon premises that cannot be logically proved.

—not a dabateable point; it is an axiom, not an inference I have no hope whatever of convincing an atheist by argument. The man who does not *feel* the argument of his own intuitions—who is deaf to the manifold but harmonious, the mute but mighty, witnesses which are given in the evidence for a God from every part of this stupendous universe—would never be worked into a belief by my lisping propositions. “Every step,” says the celebrated Richter, “of finite knowledge can be reached by learning and perseverance; but the infinite, which supports the end of these steps, can only be seen at a glance, not reached by counting. We arrive there by wings, not by steps. To prove, as to doubt, the existence of God, is to prove or to doubt the existence of existence.”*

Having, therefore, no great confidence in the competency of logic to try the question, we shall take it into the court of *intuition*. We shall try it by the spontaneous feelings of the soul, rather than by the formal deductions of the understanding. All modern philosophers of authority have acknowledged that there are such fundamental principles. Kant speaks of them as the categories of the understanding, and the ideas of pure reason. Reid calls them the principles of the *communis sensus*, very unhappily translated by a name usually differently applied—common sense. Stewart calls them the laws of human thought or belief. Brown speaks of them as the primary universal intuitions of direct belief. Cousin talks of them as simple mental aperceptions, and primitive judgments. Mackintosh elsewhere represents them as the indispensable conditions of thought itself. It is to them, as we apprehend, that Whewell refers under the phrase “fundamental ideas,” so often employed by him. Sir William Hamilton has completed all past metaphysics on this subject, by showing that the argument, from the principles of common sense, is one strictly scientific and philosophic; and, by a critical view of the nomenclature, all proceeding on the same principle, which has been employed by upwards

* “Levana,” by Jean Paul F. R. Richter, p. 69.

of one hundred of the profoundest thinkers in ancient and modern times.* In fact, the truly philosophic of every age agree in recognising not merely the existence, but the *supremacy*, of the authority to which we now submit the question of anti-theism.

I. WE SUBMIT IT TO THE PHILOSOPHIC INTUITION OF THE SOUL. There is a deep thirst in our nature for the ascertainment of *causes*: the heart pants after parent forces. Unlike the brute, we rest not content with the impressions which external phenomena make upon the senses, we are deeply solicitous about the causes. This principle may be called *curiosity* in common life, *inquiry* in metaphysics, *causality* in phrenological speculations; but in all it is one self-same principle, felt by every heart, and acknowledged as *instinctive* by every thinker. It is the soul of the understanding; it opens the eyes and plumes the pinions of intellect; it keeps the *wherefore* ever on the lip; it moves us upward from particular facts to general truths—from the falling apple to the monarch force. Impelled by its restless impulse, we step up the ladder of secondary causes toward the blue, broad heavens of universal laws. It is the parent of all those scientific discoveries whose practical application to daily life has made the civilized world what it is. Telegraphs, railroads, and steam engines, are but ideas brought down by student minds from those far-up regions of thought, into which this potent instinct had lifted them. Thus the cause-inquiring student, living in the obscurity of solitude, reaches those general truths which, although pronounced visionary impracticabilities by his contemporaries, become, in after ages, popular facts and mighty impulses to propel the world on its advancing march. Great ideas are ever born in the upper realms of abstraction; and it is not until these *potent intangibilities* have learnt the language of common life, so as to speak familiarly to men,

* See the "Method of the Divine Government, Physical and Moral, by Rev. James M'Cosh, A.M., p. 309.

that they are invited to come down from their ethereal state, incarnate themselves in some new *body*, whose young energies shall help the world in its daily work. This desire to ascertain causes implies, of course, an original or native faith that all effects have causes—a belief to whose truth all experience yields its ready and concurrent testimony.

Now, the point which I wish particularly to be remarked is this, that this *cause-inquiring tendency*, which is a *native* element of the soul, and from which such blessings flow, can never be satisfied in its investigations under either of the following conditions:—First. When the cause assigned for an effect is *felt* to be insufficient. If, for example, in inquiring into the origin of the Pyramids, I am told that the delicate hand of an Eva piled up those stones, one by one, from base to apex; or if, surveying some magnificent superstructure, the masterpiece of the world's art, I am told that the obtuse mind of another TOPSY drew the plan, with all its graceful and intricate sections; would not this deep-seated principle of my nature revolt, either with scorn or indignation, from the account? Nor, secondly, could this tendency be satisfied if no idea of the nature of the cause assigned could be formed. When I am told by scientific men that such and such *law*—of which I am unable to form any intelligible conception—has produced this and that phenomenon, I am silenced, but not satisfied. The telling me that attraction has done this, and electricity has done that—since I know nothing of either but by *effects*—is of no greater satisfaction to me than the asserting that these effects produced themselves.

Now, how stands anti-theism in relation to this *philosophic intuition*? Has it a satisfactory answer to the questions it suggests? I turn to it, and ask, What produced the innumerable complicated organizations and ever-changing phenomena of this magnificent system of things on which I find myself? What piled up the mountains, made a channel for the mighty waters, and covered the earth with verdure? What embosomed the terraqueous globe in an atmosphere

which conveys to me the light of distant orbs, and the fragrance of sweetest lands, whose every breath is life, and every vibration music? What tenanted sea and earth and air with the million tribes of sentient life? What rounded, brightened, and poised in their spheres, that "multitude, which no man could number," of planets and systems which roll above me, exciting my profoundest wonder and awe? What does anti-theism reply to this instinctive questioning? Does it refer to me a cause which I feel to be *adequate*, or concerning which I can form any *intelligible idea*? No. One of its school directs me to this cause, and another to that. One talks of *chance*, another of *nature*, another of *law*, and so on. I cannot *feel* that they are sufficient; I do not understand them; I only know how to spell and pronounce their names. This anti-theism, instead of satisfying my cause-seeking tendency, provokes and insults it by its miserable speculative puerilities. I can accept none of its theories, not because they are too *sceptical*, but because they are too *fanciful* and *credulous*: they will not stand the test of the philosophic in human nature. The eternal spirit of philosophy, which breathes in us all, and grows stronger as we get good and free, renders it as impossible for us to adopt anti-theism, in any of its forms, as it is for beasts or birds to the ten commandments.*

Farther:—

II. WE SUBMIT IT TO THE MORAL INTUITION OF THE SOUL. There are two moral sentiments of which we are conscious, which, on account of their ever-acting forces, coeval with human history, we are bound to class with all that is

* "I had rather believe all the fables in the legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind; and therefore, God never wrought miracles to convince it. It is true that a little philosophy inclineth men to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion; for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no farther; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity."—*Bacon's Essays*.

instinctive in our spiritual nature—the sentiment of *moral subjection*, and the sentiment of *felt dependence*.

The former is that element which is popularly denominated CONSCIENCE—an original attribute of our nature which has to do with the *rightness* or *wrongness* of actions—which is ever inquiring into the *ought* or *ought not*. It is a reality too profoundly and widely *felt* for many to deny, or even to question. All philosophers worthy the name believe in it; however they vary in their definitions and designations, they are agreed as to the fact of its being, and the general circle of its action. It speaks in all languages; all dialects, barbarous and civilized, have terms which it has coined to express itself. In the darkest districts of heathendom the missionary discovers that the laws of nature had not been more regularly at work than this “accusing or excusing” power. It has everywhere antedated doom’s-day, and prefigured the processes and issues of the retributive future. Even the sceptic has turned pale at its flash, and trembled at its peal. Ah! that flash is ever the reflection of those lightnings, and that peal the reverberation of that thunder, which encircled in terrific sublimity Horeb’s brow of old, and made the very leader of God’s elect to “exceedingly fear and quake.”*

Now, this sentiment of moral subjection implies an underlying instinctive *belief* that we are subject to some great moral authority; that there is some existence whose *dictum* is our law, to whose tribunal we are amenable, whose decisions must determine our fate; and the question it starts is, where is this authority?—where is this standard of right? Truly, every man may say, “My heart and my flesh crieth out for this moral authority.” Now, has anti-theism any answer to this question?—any supply for this want? Nothing—*emphatically nothing*. It has not a ray of moral

* For remarks on conscience, see Adam Smith’s “Theory of Moral Sentiments;” “The Philosophy of Spirits in Relation to Matter,” by C. M. Burnett, M.D.; Dr. Thomas Brown’s “Philosophy;” Butler’s “Sermons on Human Nature;” M’Cosh on the “Method of the Divine Government.”

light; its voice is only to the fanciful and speculative in human nature. It has not a word to the inner heart of man—the conscience. It says nothing concerning a standard of duty, for, in the rejection of a God, it ignores all moral laws. Sooner can darkness and light co-exist than atheism and morality: they are eternal incompatibilities. You must reverse the laws of mind before they can have a mutual existence in the same system of thought. Once, in the history of the world, righteous Providence permitted an occurrence, to symbolize to every eye, and demonstrate to every heart, this metaphysical truth. When, in the last century, atheism entered the mind of France, morality took wing, and left the scene. The atheistical principles with which Lagrange, Rousseau, Helvetius, Grimm, D'Alembert, Buffon, and others, impregnated the Gallic people, soon produced their fruit: that generation passed not away before the fields were ripe for the harvest. The social temple was torn into a thousand pieces. Man lost all respect not merely for human *rights*, but for human life. In the eye of the political aspirant it had no more value than the life of the pheasant in the eye of the sportsman; the moral sentiment was expatriated, the “reign of terror” begun. The French eagle pounced down upon her own offspring, fastened her deadly talons upon the vitals, and bathed her pinions in the blood of her own progeny. Let that “reign of terror” ever stand in the court of the world’s history, as a witness to the fact that anti-theism, instead of having aught to meet the cravings of our moral nature, stifles its cries, and paralyzes its powers; or let it stand up as a tall beacon upon the rock of the past, throwing its crimson rays athwart the sea of coming ages, to warn the men who shall yet embark on “life’s solemn main,” of the atheistic shoals and quicksands on which a mighty nation all but perished.

The other sentiment which I have mentioned as connected with our *moral intuition* is that of *felt dependence*. This is everywhere. At the foundation of the proudest heart there

lies a humiliating consciousness of dependence. It is felt in the first dawn of reason, and deepens with the lapse of years. The most stolid ignorance cannot obliterate it, nor can the proudest philosophy argue it away; not all the supports that human sympathy could suggest, or worldly wealth supply, can remove it. The prince, amidst the most plausible flatteries of courtiers, feels it, as well as the beggar in the dark and chilly scenes of indigence and want. Put what earthly prop you may under man, and it will still throb in his soul. It gives an air of solemnity and mystery to every man's life; it involves every other moral sentiment within us; it is the sphere in which *Conscience* plays her part; it is the ultimate fact in our spiritual constitution; it is the fountain-head of all religions. It has reared temples for the world, transformed men into priests, and wood and stone into gods. It is the breath of prayer, the song of thanksgiving, the soul of worship, through all lands and worlds. Now, what does this instinct require? for what does it crave? Is it not for some ONE transcending all sublunary existences, in whom it might repose its utmost confidence, and centralize its love? Consciousness and the religious history of humanity answer, YES.

Has anti-theism anything to meet this, the deepest want of our nature? Has it an object to whom we can give our supreme affection, and unsuspiciously trust with our entire destiny? We need not speak the answer. Anti-theism is like that unnatural father to whom Jesus once alluded as an impossible character, who would offer a "stone" or a "serpent" to his starving child craving for bread. The soul of humanity "crieth out for the living God;" and anti-theism, with a horrid *unnaturalness*, present the idle figments of a disordered brain.

Again:—

III. WE SUBMIT IT TO THE PROGRESSIVE INTUITION OF THE SOUL. That man has an instinct for advancement is too obvious from history, and too deeply felt in the heaving

aspirations and anxious struggles of every-day life, to be questioned. Impelled by this power, the world is ever changing its condition, and moving upward; every age stepping farther from the base and nearer the heights of being. Philosophic theories, political constitutions, and religious opinions, which were regarded as the glories of one age, are looked back upon with something like contempt by its successor. Thus institutions and systems, like words, become antiquated, and sink into disuse. History is but a museum of tools that existing workmen disdain to use, and a closet for "old clothes" which the present generation has outgrown. There are many things among us now in a state of obsolescence: they are ripening for decay. This instinct knows nothing either of exhaustion or satisfaction: the higher the point attained, the greater the capacity and desire for the upward still.

Now, *moral excellence* is involved in all true advancement. The progress of a people in the arts and sciences, unless there be at the same time an advancement in *heart-goodness*, will be miserably partial, unsatisfactory, and transient. Greece and Rome will ever stand forth in the world's literature, with their many-chaptered volumes, to illustrate this truth. The fact is, science may advance man's intellect, and art his material interests, but *goodness* alone can advance *himself*. He—the *man*—only rises as his *sympathies* gain flow, purity, and depth, as his *conscience* gains sensitiveness and authority, and his *will* promptitude, flexibility, and power.

Now, this *progressive instinct*—which necessarily requires *heart-goodness*—calls aloud for some copy or type of perfect excellence; something that shall always be in advance of it, attracting and guiding it on; some "mark for the prize" after which to press. Does anti-theism supply this? No; it gives nothing greater than man, and teaches us that man is simply a compound of dust. We, with our progressive instincts, look at it, and *feel* that it has nothing above us—nothing up to us—that it is altogether beneath us. We want something to point and draw us upward, and it has

nothing to meet the case. It supplies us with neither *model* nor *motive* for moral progress.

IV. WE SUBMIT IT TO THE AFTER-LIFE INTUITION OF THE SOUL. The sentiment that there is a life beyond the grave is manifestly common to mankind. "We find that many nations, long before they had any philosophy, or enjoyed the light of revelation, or before they endeavoured to prove the immortality of the soul, by arguments drawn from reason, still possessed a firm belief of the continuance of the soul. So it was with the Egyptians, the Indians, the Thracians, the Celts, the ancient Germans, the ancient Greeks and Romans; and so it is with many of the rude heathen nations of our times. Hence we find *necromancy* practised amongst the most barbarous people of all ages; and the prevalence of this presupposes, of course, a belief in the existence of the soul beyond the grave."* It is a sentiment, like hope, and fear, and love, anterior to all philosophies, and independent of revelation. You can trace it to no sage, nor charge it on any priest. All men feel what poetry has expressed:—

"This life, this world, are not enough for us;
They are nothing to the measure of our mind."

It is ever changed into hope or fear, according to the state of the conscience. A sense of innocence invests the future with attraction, but a sense of guilt ever clothes it with the hideous forms of terror; but so strong is this sentiment, that though the future appears dark, we would still have it. We would rather chance the most unfavourable probabilities than cease to be. We revolt with inexpressible horror from the idea of closing our eyes for ever on this fair universe; of thinking no more, and loving no more; of having both our consciousness and being quenched in eternal night. Oh!

"I feel
That instinct of immortal life in me
Which prompts me to provide for it."

* "Knapp's Theology." See also Enfield's "History of Philosophy."

What has anti-theism for this craving of our nature? What has it to meet this thirst for immortality? What? A cold, black, horrific ANNIHILATION! The grave bounds our all. We take no step beyond it. All our purposes, aspirations, interests, powers, are confined to the ever-narrowing circle of our earthly days. We are lost in death, as the leaf is lost in the autumnal blight that has cut it from the stem, or as the flame is lost in the wind that has blown it out.

We have thus pursued, with rapid step, the path of thought we marked out for ourselves at the outset. We think that we have indicated a method of treating this momentous subject, which has been hitherto overlooked, but which, in abler hands, might be employed with unequalled advantage. Right glad shall we be if others, of more leisure and learning, power and patience, will take up the scheme, and work it out into an overawing form, that shall cause theoretic atheism to hide its head for ever. Brief though our remarks have been, we think they have rendered obvious the fact, that, let anti-theism be true or false, so long as man has these intuitions he can never adopt it. Our aim has not been to argue, from these deep and universal sentiments of our nature, the being of a God, but simply to show that these sentiments, whether they are innate or not, are of such a character—have such a powerful hold on our being—as to render anti-theism incompatible with that nature whose HEART AND FLESH CRIETH OUT FOR THE LIVING GOD. *Anti-theism is anti-humanity.* The subject authorizes us to say to an atheist, My friend, whatever be the merits of your theory, it can never spread unless you eradicate these sentiments from the human soul. You may use your logic and your eloquence until the last sun shall rise on the earth, and you may bear down the understandings of many by your appeals, but, deep in the soul, there will be the *feeling* that anti-theism is a *lie* to our common humanity.

The subject, I confess, fills me with astonishment at the fact, that there should be found one of the human species

so thoroughly estranged from his nature as to deny the being of God. I am aware that apologies are sometimes offered on behalf of the ancient atheists. They lived in a dreamy age, it is said : the world-waking voice of Christianity had not fallen on their sleepy ears. Jesus was not born, nor was the true method of philosophic investigation discovered to them. Lord Bacon had not appeared. In the field of inquiry, they were like men penetrating a strange country in the dimmest dawn. There was no pathway, and no foot had ever trod those districts before. The sun had not risen above the horizon ; only a few grey streaks appeared on the distant hill. Their errors, therefore, were excusable. All this would have propriety and point, were the question one of mere logical investigation ; but as it is one of *nature*, of *feeling*, of *soul*, it is *utterly* irrelevant.

The correspondence of Christianity with these institutions will appear in a subsequent homily.

Confirmatory Illustrations of the preceding Homily, from a Discourse on "Modern Philosophical Infidelity; or, the Personality of God." Preached before the University of Oxford, by J. GARBETT, A.M.

THE "FELT" WANT OF GOD.

"He lives in us; we live in Him. As the primal law of gravitation pierces all depths, and makes all matter, bound together by an unconscious relationship, tend to the centre; even so, all spirits, in which there is a true life, are obedient to one law of motion. The living God is a point whither the streams of being are ever converging, and witnessing to the fathomless deep from which they originally issued. They emanate from him; they return to him; in a never-ending and glorious circle.

"My soul is athirst for God—even for the living God; when shall I come to appear in the presence of God? This is, indeed, incapable of being communicated, in *the way of demonstration*, to others, for consciousness and inward experience, save by sympathy, are untransferable;

but it is nevertheless *real evidence* of God's personal existence, and attributes. The effects produced, and the essential cravings supplied, have an exact dependency on their several causes; in other words, on the outward personal God! Given the results, the causes too are given. The subjective *probably here* infers the answering objective, *to say the least*.

"There is a real life within him. There is in him a bubbling fountain of thought and intellectual motion, the essence of a self-conscious spirit, which is ever fresh and unwearied. He wanders from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven, and yearns for the Infinite. He is no slave to the elements, subjugated to the heaven above, or the earth beneath, bound down to a valley or a mountain. He is no passive recipient of impulses from without, and fashioned by them, this way or that, without the power or inclination to resist. No; he is of regal aspect, and he is a part of the ruling powers of the universe; '*Os homini sublimae dedit, cœlumque tueri iussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.*' He scans, and is undeniably akin to, all the beauty and grandeur of the shoreless infinite around him. His mind is a mirror, self-conscious, and he reflects the universe."

THE PERSONALITY OF A GOD.

"But, it may be said, even if we acknowledge all this, has it brought us *argumentatively* nearer to viewing God himself, as such a living person for whom *the soul may be athirst*? Yes, it certainly has; for, in the first place, this personality is evidently a perfection; and it is clear that anything which does not possess it, or possesses it in a low degree, whether it be like the earth, however exquisitely modelled into beauty and sublimity manifold, or the beasts of the field, however marvellous their living powers, must be inferior to ourselves. And, therefore, Almighty God *must* be a person likewise; for, if not, he would be inferior to ourselves, contrary to the supposition on which we go. And the very name imports that he is, at all events, the *highest* of beings. You may, indeed, if you please, abandon the intellect to the lawless tyranny of imagination: for our Maker has endowed the mind of man with the awful and mysterious licence of transcending the conditions of its *real* nature, and of ranging the infinite abyss of speculation, absolutely *to its own* conception, free from all chains and limitation!—a terrific liberty! You may indulge that lawless and anarchical faculty, which, making a slave of the dialectic and constructive powers, has, in the philosophic theology of Germany, often supplanted reason, historic evidence, and true scientific induction! Drunk with the maddening wine of intellectual licentiousness and creative speculation, you may rave eloquently of a Being of infinite power, who pours forth out of his exhaustless bosom, unfathomable as the abyss of space itself, all glory, all living things, multi-

audinous and diversified beyond creative arithmetic, such as fill the universe. And yet, by the same right of unreason and self-will, you may lay it down that he has not a self-consciousness, nor a choice, nor anything, in short, of that which makes us, to our fellow-men, objects of love and hope, of dread and hatred, of joy and misery. And you may then—piling postulate on postulate into the empty air, till you reach, in haze and mist, the limbo of utter unreality—set up this blind and dumb, and deaf abomination, with a crown upon its head, on the throne of Him who is, and was, and is to be—the living Jehovah.

“But this is not to represent unto ourselves a God, but a monster, stretched uncouthly through infinite space; in some blind chaotic sort omnipotent; unconsciously engendering, out of darkness like the nether pit, light and mind, and all manner of contradictions to its own blank, unconscious self; a brute, unintelligent, anartistic power; and ONE, not by the essential individuality of a substance, in which there is no accident, or separableness of parts and qualities, but by a mere logical oneness, and an aggregation of diversities.

“But this is not a God, according to the supposition; and of course, is not a living, loving, avenging, awful Deity. Why, in such a case, though the spirit within us is clothed in perishable dust and ashes, we should be far superior, in the order of intelligent being, to such a Deity, with all his immensity. Nay, though he be *said* to be everywhere, because a portion of him is in every place, yet, in fact, he is nowhere. He has not an *intensive*, but only an *extensive* being—divisible, removable, destructible. He has, therefore, *no being* at all, in truth; for he *nowhere is*. He is not, therefore, a God, who is not only *a* being, but BEING ITSELF. For a God must be in every place, *totus in toto, et totus in qualibet parte*.”

The Pulpit in the Family ;

OR,

A DOMESTIC HOMILY ON HUMAN DEPENDENCE, AND
DIVINE GUIDANCE.

“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”—
PROV. iii. 6.

JOHN HOWE, in his *Living Temple*, gives a quaint description of what he terms the Epicurean deity. There were those in his days, as in ours, who denied the conversableness of God with man ; of whom Howe says, “Great care is taken by them to set the Deity at a distance remote enough. He must be complimented out of this world as a place too mean for his reception, and unworthy such a presence. And, with the same pretence of observance and respect, it is judged too great a trouble to him, and inconsistent with the felicity of his nature and being, that he should give himself any diversion or disturbance in governing the world ; so that nothing more of duty is owing to him than a certain kind of arbitrary veneration, which we give to anything or person that we apprehend to excel us, and to be in some respects better than ourselves—an observance merely upon courtesy. We are not obliged to worship him as one with whom we have any concern, and do owe him no more homage than the Great Mogul, or the Khan of Tartary, and, indeed, are less liable to his severity, or capable of his favours, than theirs ; for of theirs we are in some remote possibility capable, but of his not at all. In one word, all converse between him and man—on his part by providence, and on ours by religion—is quite cut off.”

This Epicurean idea of God still lingers about many minds, and there are those who account it a weakness, perhaps fanaticism, to seek the guidance or implore the blessing of

God upon purely secular transactions; whilst, on the other hand, there are many devout Christians who feel, and who acknowledge themselves, perplexed when they dwell upon the connexion of prayer with their outward life, or how it is possible for the supplications of man to alter the general course of events, or suspend the laws by which the universe is governed. Our text this morning meets the first class, by the assurance that God is conversable with man, and that man MAY BE conversable with God; and that, irrespective of all accidents or circumstances, man is invited to submit all his ways to the Lord; and that with whatever difficulties the theory may be beset, God will direct his paths. And our text meets the difficulties of the second class—the real and conscientious difficulties of the devout—by directing them to do what they may not fully comprehend; just to submit their life and all its phenomena to the will of God in the attitude of conscious dependence, and the spirit of filial submission. “*In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*”

Perhaps it may be thought that to the Jew obedience to such a precept was much easier than for us. He had only to go into the temple, and consult the high priest: on his ephod Urim and Thummim marvellously displayed themselves. No doubt was too perplexing, and no difficulty too great, not to be dissolved there; and thus the pious Hebrew might return home lightened of burdens, and relieved of cares, that—but for the outward and material guidance of that dispensation—might have crushed him to the earth. But then we think, our case is not like that; with us are the unseen and the spiritual. The visible and the vocal are alike withdrawn. We are shut up to principles and to general laws. We may not discover the one, and we may misapply the other. Oh! for the days of the Urim and Thummim!—the days of the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night!

First. We observe that the *acknowledgment of God in all our ways* supposes, as a preliminary, that *what we are about to do is consistent with Christian principle*. I need not say that.

Christian principle is on the side of everything that is high and honourable and pure in the character of man. A mean Christian, a dishonourable Christian, an impure-minded Christian, are associations of light and darkness unknown to Christian verity. A Christian man may be weak and tempted; he may manifest an infirmity here or there, and may deeply lament it, and watch over himself, and strive against it earnestly with prayer; but, however weak, however far removed from actual realization, may be the Divine idea of his life, the most imperfect Christian man does not deliberately do wrong. He does not, and he cannot, go with his eyes open into any plan that involves the violation of Christian principle; he does not, and he cannot, deliberate and devise, and then proceed calmly to do anything which requires breach of trust, violation of confidence, sacrifice of character, smothering or hushing up of conscientious doubts, or anything of this kind. However imperfect the man may be, looked at in particular acts and parts of his life, yet, looked at as a whole, taking him altogether—looking not at this little failing, or that lamented weakness, but at the outward, steady, progressive purpose of his life, he is seen to be a good man, above the trickeries and the lowness of those who have not the fear of God before their eyes. You may find fault with some of the scenes in some of the acts, and discover redundancy here and weakness there, but the whole drama of his life shall be one of worth and power and virtue.

Do you ask the secret of this man's unity? Do you ask the governing impulse of this man's life? You have not far to look. The answer is not only close at hand, it is also upon every side. What is the secret of the constancy of nature? What binds the stars of heaven to their appointed orbits? Why do flowers come in spring, and fade in autumn? Why, amidst all the variations of seasons, does every year give us its seed-time and its harvest? And why do we tell our children that they may calculate on these unerring signs until the end of time? Because, my brethren, all these things live and move, and have their being, in God. Uncon-

sciously, but truly, they do that which God intends them to do; and, fulfilling the functions of their being, they are constant and unvarying in their appearances and influences.

Such is the secret of the Christian's life. Consciously and intelligently, he lives and moves, and has his being, in God. Consciously and intelligently, he realizes the distinct apprehension of God all the day long. His acknowledgment of God does not consist of a prayer in the morning and forgetfulness through the day, nor of a prayer in the evening at the close of such forgetfulness. He acknowledges God all the day long: he resolves to do nothing on which he may not ask the blessing of God. He could not be deliberately guilty of a violation of principle, just simply because God is in his thoughts. He buys and sells like other men; he toils and rests like other men; he loses and he gains like other men; he remains at home, and goes out for a change, like other men; but underneath all this outward development there lies the guidance of the strong principle of Christian life, that makes his buying fair and his selling just; that makes his toil moderate and regulated, and his rest welcome; that makes his losses tolerable, and his gains equitable; that makes his domestic life a happy, natural, and wholesome one, and his recreations the unbending of the bow previous to its renewed exercise. In all things this man is under law to God, and this law *asserts* its presence, and *exerts* its power, under all the variations of his life; and hence he comes into the habit of making mental reference to God, of acknowledging God in all his ways, and doubts not that God will direct his paths.

We observe again—

Secondly. *This acknowledgment of God is the constant accompaniment of a filial spirit.* The true child may not always understand, but will always obey the will of his parent. The filial spirit regulates the discordances between the understanding and the life: the thing the father wishes must be done, although, as yet, the child sees not its reason. This, and only this, is the healthy development of a child-spirit. To see a child act the parent, or a boy imitate the

man, is to see a revolting and a degrading sight. The simulation of the manners of man by the ape is not more so, because the filial spirit is absent in such, and in its absence the reverence, the tenderness, the submission, due ever from the child to the parent, are gone also. The child sits in judgment upon his father, canvasses his father's actions, publishes his father's mistakes, and learns to ridicule, instead of loving, his best earthly friend. All this, in daily life, is seen where the filial spirit is wanting. Take that away, and everything of beauty and of worth in the life of a child is gone, and gone for ever. Nothing can replace it. High-sounding words of professed affection—many and costly and frequent presents—outward assiduities of attention—all, all are in vain, if once the filial spirit is gone. The charm of all is gone; the spell that bound them is all broken; the golden chain that encircled them all is snapped; and farewell home, in all that makes home a place of blessed rest, when once the filial spirit has made to itself wings, and flown away.

Now, transfer all this to the religious life of the religious man. He, too, is a child: he is become one of the many children of God through Christ Jesus. That is his high privilege, and out of it rises his great responsibility. He may, without irreverence, call God his father. No term of tenderness can mean more—no word of reverence have more signification. Then, if the religious man is a child, he must behave himself as a child. It is not enough for him to do child's *work*—he must do it in a child's *temper*; it is not enough for him to bear a child's *discipline*—he must bear it in a child's *spirit*; it is not enough for him, in prayer, to say, "*Abba Father*"—that Father must be loved and recognised throughout the trials and disappointments of the day. Only this filial spirit will keep a Christian man in his place, and in his calling. When prosperous in business, the heart of such a man will rise in strong gratitude to the God of these mercies; when disappointed and unsuccessful, though he may properly recognise and condemn the human unfaithfulness and want of principle that have created his disappoint-

ment and his failure, he does not overlook his Father in heaven, who may have permitted this for wiser purposes than he can guess. In short, just as the good child does nothing at random, his filial spirit regulating all his conduct, so the Christian's filial spirit leads him to acknowledge God in all his own ways, and in all God's ways. Enough for him that God is there;—there can be no mistake and no unkindness while that is the case; and so his filial spirit makes the acknowledgment of God the joy and the strength of his heart in the house of his pilgrimage.

And once more only on this part of the subject.

Thirdly. This *acknowledgment of God is always accompanied by practical obedience*. Whether it is the cause or the effect of this obedience, it is not necessary to distinguish. Suffice it to say, that there is real and practical obedience along with the utterance that expresses the acknowledgment. Of all characters abhorrent to the Christian, the character of the hypocrite stands foremost; and that which he abhors in others he cannot permit in himself. To honour God with the lip is too terrible a sin for him to approach without alarm. Sincerity—Christian sincerity—is one of the great endeavours of his life. He would stand self-abhorred if he did not stand self-approved, and hence he never asks counsel of God without intending to be guided by it. In fact, the very object of his acknowledging God is that thereby he may be rendered more obedient in the faith. Oh! yes, my brethren, the true Christian man is always the practical Christian man. There are those around him who boast loudly of their orthodoxy, and their soundness in what are called, strangely, the doctrines of grace. The practical Christian has been taught to pray, "Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, and incline my feet alway unto thy testimonies." There are those around him who contend for the truth in the spirit of controversy, anxious only to establish some particular view of some particular text, or to prove, to their own satisfaction, some ecclesiastical dogma. The practical Christian looks on this as labour lost and time wasted. He says,

“Give me some spiritual power that I may use for the betterment of my being; tell me something that shall convert the sinner and sanctify the saint, and I will then listen to you, love you, and follow you.” There are those around him who, like the Christian party in the distracted church at Corinth, are always saying, “We are of Christ;” meaning thereby that none are but themselves. The practical Christian says, “Be it so: the Christ in my Bible is a Christ not merely to be talked of, and argued for, but a Christ to be believed, obeyed, and daily served.” There are those around him who account reverence a slavish fear, and confound assurance of hope with assurance of language; who are certain they will go to heaven, die when they may? The practical Christian says solemnly, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” He is not afraid of good works; he has never seen the Christian that had too many: and hence, every day of his life, his devotional acknowledgment of God is accompanied with practical manifestation of the power of faith.

My brethren, in bringing this part of our subject to a close, may we not put it to ourselves whether this is the character of our Christianity? Cautious of each step, and fearful of each peril, do we walk only where Christian principle guides, and Christian hope sustains? Alive to the danger of a wayward and a wilful spirit, do we pray that the power and the freshness of a filial spirit may ever be ours? and do we manifest this in daily and practical obedience? If so, we may rejoice together. This is the acknowledgment of God spoken of in our text; and we may turn to the blessedness of the promise with which it concludes. Let us now ask, in what way prayer is answered? or, in other words, when we may hope that Divine direction is given in answer to prayer? Here lies the difficulty to which I alluded at the beginning—a difficulty that rests often upon the mind of the Christian with painful pressure. I am in circumstances that need Divine guidance; I neither

know how to come in, or how to go out; my weakness and my irresolution beset me as I look at difficulties to be surmounted, duties to be discharged, or discipline to be submitted to. Under these circumstances, I commit my way unto God by prayer: I acknowledge him in this my present perplexity. I dare not trust myself alone in these new circumstances, and I rely upon his promise for direction and help. But then, having done so, the question comes, how may I know, with some degree of certainty, that my prayer has been heard, and that I am, indeed, sharing in the love and attention of Him who directs me thus to acknowledge Him in all my ways? This is a question of no slight importance, and one that demands a serious examination. I cannot pretend to go into all the ramifications of a subject so extensive as this in one discourse, and shall confine myself to two observations, that may shed some light on this difficult but important subject. Those two thoughts are these:—first, *the reflex influence of prayer*, and, secondly, *the arrangements of God's providence, that secure the answer to prayer*.

1. Let us take the first idea. *Look a moment at the reflex benefits of prayer*. The apostle alludes to this when he says, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the *peace of God*, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." That is one of the ways in which prayer is answered. *God's peace*—the peace which God bestows—is imparted to the man. He has his anxieties and cares, his looking outs and looking forwards, with much apprehension of mind; how this will succeed, or how the other will be right, are all enigmas of the future to him; but he has learnt, as we have already said, confidently to commit the future unto God. He knows that God will order all things aright. He knows that this world is not a fatherless world. He knows that he himself has done his best intellectually and religiously, and now he leaves the whole affair in the hands of God. He does not rely exclusively on *his own*

powers, because he has often seen wiser men than himself baffled, and better men deceived. He does not rely on *his own plans exclusively*, for he has often seen the “best-laid schemes” of the most thoughtful men go entirely astray. He does not rely exclusively on *the promises and the fidelity* of those with whom he is connected, because he has learnt that it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. He does not *rely exclusively* on the *foresight which has enabled him* to calculate the future almost to a certainty, because he remembers that the foresight of God may have anticipated, only to alter, every one of his arrangements. But the man has *peace*, calm tranquillity of spirits, in the mere thought that he has commended all to God; and now he is more concerned to leave the matter with God than for any other matter; and thus the man is kept in peace. Peace is the garrison of his spirit: dark thoughts may hover at a distance, but they cannot enter. He is kept in peace. These troubles cannot invade his retreat; and all this because, by prayer, he has acknowledged God, and God is about to direct his steps.

But the duty and the privilege of prayer do not rest exclusively on its reflex benefits. Apart from these benefits, which are of the most elevated character, there is a perfectly independent basis on which the duty of prayer rests, and while we regard with joy the present results of this exercise, we must not forget—

2. *The arrangements which God has made with the answer of prayer.* This is a subject of the deepest interest to us. It is one which has engaged the attention of some of our greatest and best men, but which has received far too little attention from the Christian Church. Very many would feel perplexed to answer the question, in a manner satisfactory to themselves, How does God answer prayer? while, at the same time, they are convinced that there is no miraculous intervention on their behalf, no suspension of a single law in order that their petitions may be answered; and, more than that, there is often a painful feeling

that things go on as usual, that no particular indication of Providence has appeared, and that if prayer has been answered, it has been answered in a time and in a manner unknown. Let us offer a few remarks on this intricate subject, in the hope of clearing up, if ever so little, the difficulty with which it is surrounded. As we look abroad upon the universe of God, we meet everywhere with the existence of general laws, by which the purposes of God are fulfilled throughout creation. Those general laws were part of the arrangements made for the government of the world from the beginning—even from everlasting. Looking at those general laws, I see that they are not mere mechanical contrivances affecting the huge masses of matter by which we are surrounded. I see the physical is made subordinate to the moral, and that these general laws constitute the moral administration of the world in which I live. I see that these laws are ever on the side of what is virtuous and good, and always against that which is vicious and bad. The bounties of his providence are thus supplied to the upright and the industrious. It is thus the plots of wicked men are detected, and themselves covered with shame; and it is thus that men who violate law carry with them the self-inflicted penalties of transgression; it is thus that a life of integrity gives a man a sunny heart in the decline of his years, while a life of false and fictitious excitement leaves nothing but vain regret and mortified experience. All this is done by general laws—that is, by the pre-ordained constitution of things, by which the course of this world, either with or without its consent, is rendered subservient to the law of God. And these general laws, let it be again observed, are not of a physical character merely; they have a marked moral character, indicating most clearly that something besides the mechanical regularity of the world has entered into the mind of its Creator.

Now, we may get some idea from this of the way in which God answers prayer. There are spiritual purposes to be realized in the government of God, as well as moral ones. It

is intended that man should not only be moral, but religious. It is the will of God that he should not only be just and upright and faithful in the sight of man, but that he should also be devout, loving, obedient to *him*. And when I find that the moral government of God is always served by his general laws—that is, if I fall in with the previous arrangements of law, and become just and moral—I may calculate certainly on the results of that established law; if I find this, I have very little difficulty in seeing how spiritual laws of a general character are made to serve the spiritual purposes of the Divine government. When I enter within the precincts of law, and walk in harmony with God's will about truth, and temperance, and integrity, and so on, I know there is no peradventure about the results; it is all fixed—immutably fixed—in the foreordained constitution of the world.

So also, when I enter within the precincts of other and more spiritual laws—when I bow my knee to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—when to the source of my intelligence I render back my intelligent homage—when to Him in whom I live and move, and have my being, I express my filial dependence and my devout thanksgiving—when to Him against whom I have revolted I acknowledge my sins, and seek his pardon;—when I do this, I am walking in harmony with spiritual law, I have come within the range of Divine agency, I stand within the precincts of God's own fixed will; and because he has already anticipated the prayer of his faithful people, I may rely on the certain fulfilment of his previous arrangements.

The time does not allow us to dwell upon vast evidence everywhere surrounding us, that there is a wondrous uniformity and simplicity of law in all the departments of Divine operation; and it is altogether congruous—with all that may be learnt of God from his works or his word—to suppose that this is the way in which God answers prayer, without any interference with laws already in operation.

There is an objection that may be made to these views

which it would not be right to pass over. It may be said, then, if God changes not, and governs all things by fixed laws, why pray at all, since your prayer cannot alter the course of things? This is a deistical objection that has often been made. The fair reply, I think, is this: that the laws by which the answer to prayer is secured, proceed upon the foreseen fact that prayer will be offered. He who knows all things knew that the devout heart would pray, and, knowing this, has arranged spiritual laws, contrivances of the most subtle and delicate kind, connexions between events of the most intricate character, by which prayer is answered, and the promise of our text fulfilled.

Besides which, this objection proves too much. I might as well say, *why be industrious*, when general and fixed laws have already arranged the result? Why be *temperate*, if it has been previously arranged that fixed results should follow? In other words, why should I place myself in harmony with any of God's laws, when I know that these laws are fixed and definite in their results? Or thus: placing myself in harmony with all other Divine laws, why should I place myself out of harmony in this one respect, and make prayer the only exemption, when, as evidence of the truth of their ideas, all those who have continued to persevere in prayer have, without exception, declared that, sooner or later, God has attended to the voice of their supplications?

Now, to bring these considerations to an end, if some things should have been too argumentative or too subtle for you to grasp, or to retain with readiness, let me add, that *it is not necessary for you to see* the connexion between obedience and its result to enjoy the blessing spoken of in our text. To any minds that ever feel perplexed when they meditate on this subject, the remarks we have made are offered in the hope that they may tend to widen the basis on which the duty and the privilege of prayer rest. It is no vain thing to wait upon the Lord. They who so wait will find their homage anticipated, and the merciful

provision made for the full supply of all needed good. "He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think."

And on the other hand, to withhold prayer from God is to oppose the spiritual constitution of the universe. It is the refusal of obedience, of worship, of the acknowledgment of dependence, of confession, of supplication, and of thanksgiving; and we cannot imagine that to place ourselves at that distance from God is the way to secure eternal bliss.

Let me urge you all to a consideration of these thoughts. Life is too short, and its consequences too serious, for us to spend it all in cavils or disobedience. We shall pray when we come to die. It may then be too late to pray aright. Oh! come now unto Him, and He will save us with an everlasting salvation.

Royston.

W. G. BARRETT.

MEN OUGHT ALWAYS TO PRAY.

"In this precept—to *pray always*—there is nothing of exaggeration, nothing commanded which may not be fulfilled, when we understand of prayer as the continual desire of the soul after God; having, indeed, its time of intensity, seasons of an intenser concentration of the spiritual life, but not being confined to those times; since the whole life of the faithful one should be, in Origen's beautiful words, one great connected prayer,—or, as St. Basil expresses it, prayer should be the salt, which is to salt everything besides. 'That soul,' says Donne, 'that is accustomed to direct herself to God upon every occasion; that, as a flower at sunrising, conceives a sense of God in every beam of his, and spreads and dilates itself towards him, in a thankfulness, in every blessing that he sheds upon her;—that soul who, whatsoever string be stricken in her, bass or treble, her high or her low estate, is ever turned towards God; that soul prays sometimes when it does not know that it prays.'"—*Trench.*

Gems of Thought.

Analysis of Homily the Forty-fourth.

“In the same hour came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king’s palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king’s countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.—DAN. v. 5, 6.

SUBJECT:—*The Awakening Hour of Conscience.*

THIS chapter develops two solemn facts, deserving the most earnest attention of every human being:—First. That neither the revolutions of time nor the opposition of man can hinder the fulfilment of the Divine word. Upwards of one hundred and sixty years before the catastrophe recorded in this chapter had taken place, the overthrow of Babylon had been predicted, with all the minute details of the sad event. Up to the very hour, *probabilities* seemed against such an occurrence. Babylon, with its high and massive walls, its lofty towers and broad ditches, on the last morning seemed well defended, and truly impregnable; but now, even when the king and his court appeared the least apprehensive of danger, Cyrus and his army were turning off the Euphrates, and making their way into the heart of that empire which heaven had foredoomed. “In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.” Thus his word will ever be realized. Ages may transpire, but the ETERNAL forgets it not: mountain obstacles may oppose, but the ALMIGHTY will level them with the dust. Secondly. That at the period when men fancy themselves most secure, the peril is frequently the most imminent. Probably, in the midst of the revellings of that night, many a contemptuous joke was passed as to the futilities of all invading projects. Thus it was with the *Deluge, Sodom, Jerusalem*; and thus, we are told it will be with *the Judgment*.

But the words before us direct our attention to the *awakening hour of conscience*, and we infer from them—

I. THAT IT IS AN “HOUR” THAT MUST DAWN ON THE MOST OBDURATE NATURES. There are two classes of dormant consciences; those that have never been aroused—infants and savages; and those that have been partially quickened, but deadened again—*seared*. There is an hour for the awakening of each—even the most lethargic. It was so now with Belshazzar. Other consciences of the same class have had their awakening hour—Cain, Herod, Judas, Felix, &c.

II. THAT IT IS AN “HOUR” INTRODUCED BY A DIVINE MANIFESTATION. There “came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king’s palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.” *It was very quiet*: no lightning flashed, no thunder pealed, but the gentle movements of a mystic hand. *It was very unexpected*: it was in the midst of the gladness, when the tide of festive joy ran high. *It was very palpable*: there was no way of ignoring it. It moved against the light of the candlestick. It is in this *quiet, unexpected, and palpable manner*, that God frequently brings that *idea* of HIMSELF into the soul, which ever rouses the conscience.

III. THAT IT IS AN “HOUR” ASSOCIATED WITH GREAT MENTAL DISTRESS. “Then the king’s countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.” Two things are observable here:—1. The influence of an awakened conscience upon “thoughts.” Our thoughts are governed by different principles. Sometimes *intellect* controls them, and we are ever in the region of investigation; sometimes *imagination* has the command, and then we sport in the realms of beauty; sometimes *avarice*, and then [the market is our home, and good bargains the

joy of our heart; sometimes "fleshly lusts," and then the whole nature is brutalized. But here the *guilty conscience* controls them, and this is HELL. A guilty conscience always throws the thoughts upon three subjects—the *wrong* of the past, the *guilt* of the present, and the *retribution* of the future. 2. The other thing observable is the influence of "troubled thoughts" upon the physical system. "The joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." David felt thus, for he said, "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long." The Roman soldiers felt thus when, in the garden of Gethsemane, they fell as dead men before the moral majesty of the mysterious Sufferer.

IV. IT IS AN "HOUR" WHICH IS SOMETIMES THE HARBINGER OF ETERNAL RETRIBUTION. Oftentimes the hour of moral awakening ushers in the bright and propitious morning of conversion. It was so in the case of Zaccheus, the sinners on the day of Pentecost, the Philippian gaoler, and others. *Indeed such an hour must always precede the dawn of true religion in the soul.* But here, as with Judas, it was the harbinger of retribution. "*In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.*" What a night! Ah! what a night was that! "That night" separated him for ever from his pleasures, his friends, and his empire; "that night" terminated for ever his opportunities of spiritual improvement, and quenched every ray of hope within his breast; "that night" every star in the firmament of his being went down to rise no more, and left the whole of the boundless expanse overhung with clouds surcharged with the elements of inconceivable storms.

Sinner, the day of grace is waning fast: the hour of awakening steals on. That hour shall either issue in the dawn of a new and happy life, or the chaos of moral anguish and despair!

Analysis of Homily the Forty-fifth.

"He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names."—
PSALM cxlvii. 3, 4.

THE highest work of man is to praise God; and this praise, David tells us in this psalm, is "good," "pleasant," and "comely." In it man realizes the highest unfoldment of his faculties, and the highest gratification of his heart. *It is happiness.* Praise is not in sounds, however melodious, nor in words, however devout: it is in reverential thought, holy gratitude, and heavenly aspirations; in godly purposes, and in a pure, earnest, and manly life.

An ever-vivid recognition of God's *all-pervading presence* and *universal agency* lies at the foundation of all true praise. In this psalm the hand of Deity is seen everywhere: building up Jerusalem, and gathering together the outcasts of Israel; administering relief to wounded souls, and guiding the revolutions of stars; exalting the meek, and casting down the wicked; covering the heavens with clouds; pouring the fructifying showers upon the earth, thus clothing the hills with verdure, and producing supplies for man and beast; blessing the country with protection, plenty, and peace, and sending his "words"—his moral influence—swiftly through the earth. In truth, his agency here is traced the universe through: in the bright sky and the green fields, in the showers and the hoar frosts, in the life of the lower creation, and in everything pertaining to the individual, social, and religious history of man. The birth of religion consists in the soul waking up from the dream of common life, to the conviction that God works in all things. Its first words are, "Surely God is in this place, and I know it not."

SUBJECT:—*God's Relation to Sorrowing Souls and to Starry Systems.*

1. HIS RELATION TO SORROWING SOULS. "He healeth the broken in heart." There are broken hearts and wounded

souls in this world. The flowing tear, the pensive look, the deep-drawn sigh, are everywhere symptoms of sorrowing souls. The whole human creation is groaning: there are hearts broken by *oppression, disappointment, calumny, bereavement, and moral conviction*. All this sorrow is *of human origination*. It springs not as a necessity from the constitution of things—it comes not through the regular working, but through the positive infraction, of God's laws. Misery is the creation of the creature, not of the Creator. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself," &c. God works here to remove all this misery—to heal and restore. CHRISTIANITY is the restorative element he applies: it is the Balm of Gilead: it is the tree whose fruit is for the healing of nations.

II. HIS RELATION TO STARRY SYSTEMS. "He telleth the number of the stars." Astronomy informs us that one hundred millions of stars may be seen through the telescope in our sky, and that each of them is the centre of a system, and has therefore a sky of its own, incalculably deeper and broader than these vast heavens that encircle us. In this supposition, there is involved a number of "stars" which no arithmetic can compute, and which baffles all imagination in the attempt to appreciate. But this, it would seem, after all, is as nothing compared with the immeasurable universe. Yet these stars, though they cover immensity thick as grass on earth's soil, or as sand on ocean's shore, are all known to God. "He telleth the number," &c. He knows the age, productions, size, velocity, influence, and tenants of each. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by names." He marshals them as the general his battalions, "He binds the sweet influences of Pleiades, and he looses the bands of Orion. He bringeth forth Mazzaroth in his season, and he guides Arcturus with his sons."

Looking at men in relation to this subject, they fall into three grand classes:—

1. *Those who deny God's active relation to both souls and stars.* These comprehend two distinct sections of theoretic infidels—those who deny the existence of God altogether, and those who admit his existence, but deny his superintendence in the universe; the latter regard all the phenomena and changes of nature as taking place not by the agency of God, but by the principles or laws which he impressed upon it at first. The universe is to them like a plant: all the vital forces of action are in itself, and it will go on until they exhaust and die.

2. *Those who admit God's active relation to stars, but deny it to souls.* They say that it is derogatory to Infinite Majesty to suppose his taking any notice of broken hearts. He has to do with the great, but not with the little. What is man to the world in which he lives? He is as nothing compared with its towering mountains, majestic oceans, and mighty continents. And, then, what is this globe to the system of which it is a part? A dew-drop to the ocean—a ray to the sun! It cannot be that the Infinite ONE would condescend to notice this man—*atom*! There are two or three thoughts which makes the objection appear very childish. One is, *that man's great and small are but notions.* When I say that a thing is great, all I mean is, that it is great to me. I call the tiny leaf on which I tread *little*, but to its insect population it is a vast universe. I call this globe *great*, but to the eye of an angel it appears but a mere spark in the sky. To God there is nothing great nor small. Another is, *that what we consider small, are influential parts of the whole.* Science proves that the motion of an atom must propagate an influence to remotest orbs; that all created being is but one great chain, of which the *corpuscle* is a link, which, if touched, will send its vibration to the ultimate points. In the moral system, facts show that the solitary *thought* of an obscure man can shake empires, produce revolutions, and reform society. *Analogy* suggests, and Christianity favours the supposition, that man is *influentially* connected with the

whole of the great spiritual universe, and that "to principalities and powers may be known," through humble man, some wonderful things. Another thought is, *that—even on the assumption of our conception of magnitude being correct—we have as much evidence to believe that God is as truly at work in the small as the great.* The countless myriads of existences revealed by the microscope indicate as much of God as the telescopic universe unfolds. Again: *there is good reason to believe that human souls, though in suffering, are greater than the stars in all their splendour.* These stars know nothing of their own natures; we know something of ours:—they cannot think of us; we can think of them: they are unconscious of the splendour that surrounds them;—we are awed by it:—they know nothing of the hand that made them, and rolled them in their spheres; we know something of the feelings of his very heart:—they have no power to alter their course, or to pause a moment in their career; we can say, what the great sun cannot say—"No"—to the Eternal. They are made for us, not we for them. "They shine to light our path, and point our souls to God." A *soul*, then, broken and wounded though it be, is greater than these stars. Still another thought may be noticed, namely, *that there is higher evidence to believe that God restores souls than that he takes care of stars.* The highest proof is *consciousness.* I infer, from my understanding, that God governs the heavenly bodies, that I *feel* that "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." This thought gives to its objection a contemptible insignificance.

3. *Those who profess faith in God's active relation to both, but who are destitute of the suitable spiritual feeling.* Antecedently, we should infer that, wherever there could be found a thinking moral nature like man's fully believing in this two-fold relation of God—his connexion with the heavenly bodies, and with all pertaining to the history of itself—there would be developed in that nature, as the necessary consequence of that faith—*life, humility, and devotion.*

There would be *life*, for how could such a mind really believe that God was everywhere in the universe, and always with him, and be dull and dormant? This faith, wherever it exist, must break the slumbers of the spirit, and put every faculty astir. *A sleepy soul has no faith.* There would be *humility*. David, when he lifted up his eyes to the nocturnal heavens, and saw the moon walking in her brightness, and the stars circling away in their luminous spheres, was overwhelmed with a sense of his own littleness, and exclaimed, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" *A proud soul has no faith.* There would also be *devotion*. It is said that "an undevout astronomer is mad;" but an undevout believer in God's connexion with the universe and man is impossible. Wherever, then, we find *apathetic, proud, undevout* men professing this belief, we find HYPOCRITES.

To what class, my friend, in relation to this subject, dost thou belong? Thou wouldst probably revolt at the idea of belonging to either of the former two; but the latter, for many reasons, is worse than either: it is to play the hypocrite and disgrace religion. Get, then, the true faith in the subject—the faith that will produce this true *quickenings, humbling, devotionalizing effect*—and thou shalt catch the true meaning of life; feel the world to be a temple radiating with the glory, and vocal with the praise of God, and then thou shalt step on *the true* line of human progress, and feel the *proper impulse* to advance, for it is only as thou advancest that thou canst either live spiritually or be happy.

"There is a fire-fly in the southern clime
Which shineth only when upon the wing;
So is it with the mind: when once we rest,
We darken. On! said God unto the soul,
As to the earth, for ever. On it goes,
A rejoicing native of the infinite—
As a bird of air—an orb of heaven."

Analysis of *Homily the Forty-sixth.*

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”—HEB. xi. 8—10.

SUBJECT:—*The Spiritual Production and Practical Development of True Religion.*

ABRAHAM is an extraordinary character. His position in the world's history is of sublime singularity. He is the head of a race whose annals are full of supernatural revelations, miracles, and God. His name floats in the traditions of heathens, is a household word to all civilized people, and is written in the heart of the church. Ages swell the volume of his influence, and circulate the suggestive memories of his life. I have chosen this fragment of his history in order to illustrate a subject of paramount interest to us all—*the spiritual production and practical development of true religion.*

I. THE SPIRITUAL PRODUCTION OF TRUE RELIGION. Knowing the idolatry of his country and age, it is natural to suppose that, up to the period referred to in the text, Abraham had been spiritually ignorant of the true religion; that the *Voice* which summoned him from his home, summoned him, at the same time, from his sins, and that his departure from his own country was but the outward *effect* and *sign* of his inward renunciation of his old spiritual errors and ways. Now, there are three things which effected this change in the patriarch's life, and which seem to us ever indispensable to the production of religion in the soul—*Divine sovereignty, special revelation, earnest faith.*

1. *Here is Divine sovereignty.* By sovereignty we neither mean *supremacy* nor *arbitrariness*, but the free acting of one's

nature—VOLITION. The natural and genuine volition of a being is ever the expression of his heart; it is the moral soul going out in a definite purpose. If the heart be malevolent, the sovereignty, or volition, will be to curse; if kind, to bless. *God is love*, and hence his sovereignty—"his good pleasure"—is ever to bless. God's sovereignty is *uncontrolled love*. It is "the fountain of life;" from it all beings and blessedness flow. It is the ultimate fact in the constitution of the universe; it is the source of mediation; it is the efficient cause of every conversion. Abraham's change began here, and here all true religion begins in the soul. "Of his own will begat he us." Sin and misery come without a Divine volition, but virtue and happiness never.

2. *Here is special revelation.* God revealed himself to Abraham in a special way, Acts vii. 2. Without an intelligible communion from God, constituted as the mind is, we see not how his sovereign purpose could possibly influence us. His volition acts *directly* on dead matter and brute mind, but never on moral soul but through an intelligible communication. Had the patriarch not received such a communication, he would have died a pagan in the land of his pagan fathers. It is ever so. Religion cannot be generated in any human heart apart from this *special* revelation. We disparage not nature as a revelation from God; we believe that every portion abounds with glorious truths, and that the human intellect, weak though it be, is capable of learning more from its pages than the greatest philosopher has ever conceived. But all history shows that the Divine communications of nature will never of themselves produce religion in the depraved heart. Under the light of nature the piety of Adam went out—the ante-diluvians grew ripe for the judgments that burst in the deluge—Egypt worshipped creeping things—Persia the orbs of heaven—Athens the unknown God. The Gentile world has ever been enveloped in the thick darkness of idolatry and superstition.

3. *Here is earnest faith.* Had the patriarch not *believed* the word of God, both the *purpose* and the *revelation* would

have produced on his mind no effect. No revelation can possibly influence us unless we *believe* it. A being may make to us the most momentous and thrilling communications; if they are not believed, they are perfectly powerless. Hence it is that the Scriptures lay such emphasis on faith. "He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." In the nature of the case, *there can be no salvation without faith*. Now, as these three are *essential* to the production of true religion, the absence of one or more of them will always account for its want. Why are men not religious? It must be either for the want of Divine sovereignty, or a special revelation, or an earnest faith. It is not the first. It is his will that all should be saved; he gave his Son for the purpose. It must be, therefore, either because there is no *special* revelation, or because there is no earnest faith. The former may account for the absence of true religion in pagans, but the latter is the only intelligent reason for its absence in the land of Bibles.

II. THE PRACTICAL DEVELOPMENT OF REAL RELIGION. He "obeyed." A change of mind always produces a change of conduct. True faith is the spring of true works—the exclusive germ of a holy life. His conduct develops the power of his faith in two things:—

The renunciation of an old mode of life. "He went out" from the old for ever. There was no little energy of mind required for this. The scene he forsook was fraught with many enthralling associations. *There* lived the friends of his early days, and there slumbered the dust of his ancestors; there he spent the innocence of childhood, the poetry of youth, and the ripened energies of his manly life. Fond memories, dear friendships, and secular interests, would co-operate in strengthening the spell of that country on his heart. Nor was his age favourable to the emancipation of himself from all those mystic ties. Young life is adventurous and nomadic; its romantic impulses yearn after foreign scenes; but the seventy-five winters that had passed

over our patriarch would make his "dear home twice dear." But, "by faith," he "went out." *True faith will always lead to the renunciation of the old.* "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ."

2. *The adoption of a new mode of life.* There are three things about the new life adopted by Abraham worthy of our attention, as illustrative of the inner life of the good. First. *It was a life of implicit trust in God.* "He went out, not knowing whither he went." He knew nothing of the land whither he was to wend his way, nor the path to it. This conduct would be contrary to the general opinion of men, to the counsels of friends, to the deductions of his own understanding. He *trusted* in God. This is not idle fanaticism, but true philosophy. If God direct, we should follow, (1) because he only knows our future; (2) because he can only make us happy in the future; implicit trust in God is the highest dictate of reason. Second. *It was a life of conscious strangeness on earth.* "He sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country," He did not put his heart upon that lovely land; he had no idea of making it his home. He regarded himself as a stranger there. Man only acts worthy of his reason as he treats this earth as the patriarch treated Palestine—not as a home, but a thoroughfare. Third. *It was a life of glorious prospect.* "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." In the apocalyptic scenes, this city loomed before the eye of John in all its attractive splendour and magnificent proportions.

Where art thou, my friend? Art thou in the spiritual Ur, the scene of thy moral nativity, or hast thou departed therefrom? It is God's *will* that thou shouldst depart. In the Bible he has given thee a special call. Believest thou the call? If so, thou art gone out from thine old sympathies, prejudices, and spiritual habitudes. Thou art following through the desert the voice of Him that called thee. Thou art feeling this earth to be a *strange* place, and thou art passing through it as a pathway to a *glorious city*!

Analysis of Homily the Forty-seventh.

“And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.”—LUKE xxiii. 27, 28.

SUBJECT:—*Human Sensibility.*

Two great elements enter into the constitution of the human soul—*intellect* and *affection*—the faculty of thought, and the susceptibility of feeling. These underlie all its spiritual attributes, and control all its spiritual phenomena. It is quite easy to conceive of mental existence essentially destitute of sensibility—a creature of sheer, abstract, frigid intellect. Such an existent might be very knowing and clever, but hardly capable either of enjoying happiness or of exerting influence. *Sensibility* we range amongst the cardinal blessings of being. Is it not the primary impulse of action, the bond of social union, the source from which springs every felt delight? What should we be without it? Should we have any stimulus for our souls—any faculty to taste the sweets of life—any conscious connexion with nature, society, or God? No. We should live in everlasting isolation. In the midst of a teeming universe, we should stand alone, having neither the power of attracting, nor the susceptibility of being attracted. The quickening and cementing touch of sympathy we could never receive—never give. Indeed, the very energy of man's *thought* is dependent upon the power of feeling. How weak the thought that springs not from an earnest soul—that has not been dipped in the living current of the heart! The thought that has no connexion with emotion, though the product of a great mind—a mind of keen sight and mighty span—is like the ray of the night-orb, pale and cold. Whereas, that thought which has mingled with the sympathies of the heart, breathed the quickening atmosphere of an earnest soul, is like the beam of morning—it comes from the centre of the system, it is charged with life,

it is the herald of better things to come. But thought and feeling should not be placed in antithetical relation. They are mutually dependent. Each derives its value from the influence of the other. The right action of either requires the reciprocal action of both; as thought without feeling would be powerless, feeling without thought would be wild, turbulent and reckless. It is the province of thought to refine, regulate, and humanise our affections—to map out the varied channels in which heaven ordained them to flow on for ever. We thank God for our susceptibilities; though they are the occasion of much mental suffering in this our probationary state, still we praise our Maker for the power to feel; and the more so, as Christianity teaches that the very sorrows of its disciples are disciplinary: “they yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby.” The bitterest cup has curative virtues; the fiercest storm breathes to purify.

There are three things here which Christ did in relation to human sensibility worthy of our attention. He *involuntarily awakened, distinctly rejected, and rightly directed, it.*

1. HE INVOLUNTARILY AWAKENED IT. Jesus was now on his way to Calvary. Multitudes crowded the road on which the mysterious Sufferer passed. Whilst many shouted with malignant gratification at the scene, the hearts of several women were touched into compassion, and they “bewailed and lamented him.” We wonder not at this; we rather marvel that there was a dry eye in Jerusalem, or about the neighbouring hills, that day. One might have thought that the scene would have smitten the Jewish heart, and made it out-gush with streams of sorrow, as the rod of Moses did the rock of old. Not one of the numerous spectators did he ever injure, whilst many had received signal blessings from his hand. Some had been hungry, and he fed them; others diseased, and he healed them; and others on the margin of the grave, and he restored them to life. We know of nothing more suited to rouse the sympathetic passions of mankind

than the tragedy of our Saviour's sufferings. The feeling which Jesus thus involuntarily awakened may be regarded in two aspects :—(1) *As a testimony to the injustice of his treatment.* Had there existed a settled assurance that he richly deserved from his country the agonies he was enduring, instead of this outburst of commiseration there would have been heard nothing but indignant execrations. It might be regarded, moreover (2) *As an expression of a nature favourable to religious impressions.* Although, as we shall soon see, there was no religion in the feeling displayed, the possession of such feeling is indispensable to it. If sensibility is no virtue it is a blessing, and its absence is a curse. A hardened heart has no soil in which may germinate the precious seeds of spiritual virtue and religion.

II. HE POSITIVELY REJECTED IT. "Weep not for me." It cannot fail to strike a thoughtful mind that this conduct of Christ, in relation to the *feelings* of these women was very remarkable. There are especially two circumstances in which we are all prepared to hail and appreciate genuine *sympathy*. First. *When under trial.* The law of sympathy is a benevolent provision of our Maker to help us under the varied ills of this mortal life. The sufferer *instinctively* looks for it, and earnestly seizes it when offered as the best means to soothe and sustain his spirit. And then, secondly, we appreciate it when engaged in some great enterprise. Social sympathy is ever felt to be a stimulus to great deeds. The hero on the field has nerved himself for mightier exploits when assured of the sympathy of his countrymen. The philosopher has concentrated his mind upon profounder investigations, and the poet has plumed his genius for loftier flights, as they felt the breeze of public sympathy breathing around them. The orator has waxed warm, and risen to more impassioned strains of speech, as he has felt himself in possession of the sympathies of the men he addressed.

But here we find that Christ rejected sympathy, in those

two very circumstances in which men invariably value it. He was *enduring the greatest sufferings* and *engaged in the greatest enterprise*, and yet he repudiated the sympathies that were expressed. Now, what does this remarkable fact teach? We think that it suggests at least two things:—

1. *That such sympathy, in his case, was not required.* As a *sufferer*, he did not require *pity*, but *praise*, because he chose to suffer. He had power to lay down his life, and to take it up again. In the very rejection of their sympathy, he seemed to say, “Weep not for me;” I am not here by a foreign force, but by my own will. My suffering is not some accident that has happened to me; I have come freely into it, according to my predetermined plan. You misunderstand my position: I am not an object of *compassion*, but of *commendation*. Nor did he require it in his *enterprise*. The reason men require outward sympathy in their undertakings is, because they have not sufficient *inner* power,—power of motive and principle. Like the vessels that have no inner machine to propel them on, they depend upon the outward tides and wind. But Christ had such a power *within*, that made him perfectly independent both of anathemas and hosannas: that power was unconquerable love for souls. It suggests—

2. *That such sympathy has no moral worth.* If there was anything morally excellent in the feelings they displayed towards Christ, we think he would not have spoken thus. Sympathy with Christ’s physical sufferings is a common thing. It is very easy for a minister to give such tragical representations of Calvary as to make people weep. It is a much easier work to produce sentimental tears than spiritual thoughts; but those tears Christ disdains. It is one thing to weep over Christ’s sufferings, and another thing to weep over sins; one thing to admire the picture of his outward life, and another to adore the sublime principles of his soul; one thing to desire happiness, and another to desire goodness; one thing to know Christ after in the flesh, and another to know him after in the spirit.

III. HE RIGHTLY DIRECTED IT. “Weep for yourselves, and for your children.” Why weep for themselves?

1. *Because in themselves was the moral cause of suffering.* Sin is the cause of all suffering, and sin was in them. To weep over suffering, and be indifferent to sin, is the same as the tyrant weeping over the groans of the slave, whose agonies he is, at the same moment producing; or as the murderer weeping over those wounds in his victim which he inflicts as the tears flow.

2. *Because the moral cause of suffering can only be removed by penitential sorrow.* The sorrow which Mary displayed—who washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head—and which Peter felt, who wept bitterly at the touching glance of Christ’s eye—this is “the godly sorrow” which is ever necessary to free humanity from suffering.

My sentimental friend, the subject has a solemn lesson to thee. Often hast thou wept as thou hast read the tragical narrative of our Saviour’s love, or as thou hast listened to one of those discourses on the subject, too often framed for the unworthy purpose of exciting the vulgar sympathies, and producing a popular effect. Infer not from this that thou art a Christian. Such tears prove nothing. Christ requires no tears for himself, and thou hast no tears to spare. He does not require one for his sufferings, but oceans, if thou hast them, for thy sins. His religion has to do not with the sensuous but with the spiritual sympathies of the soul; seeks not to captivate our sense for transient forms, but our sense for everlasting principles.

Analysis of Homily the Forty-eighth.

“Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.”—PSALM lxxiii. 13.

SUBJECT:—*A Right Act but a Wrong Opinion.*

I. HERE IS A RIGHT ACT. Cleansing the heart and washing the hands mean the cultivation of personal holiness ; and this is certainly a right work for man. It implies three things :—(1) *The consciousness of personal defilement* ; (2) *the possession of a cleansing element* ; (3) *the effort of personal application*. Moral evil is the defilement,—Christianity is the cleansing element,—and practical faith is the personal application.

II. HERE IS A WRONG OPINION. The writer thought that it was “in vain.” Three facts show that this is a great mistake :—(1) That moral holiness involves its own reward. (2) That moral holiness is promoted by temporal adversity. (3) That moral holiness will meet with its perfect recompense hereafter.

No ; this cleansing the heart is no vain work. No engagement is so real and profitable. Every fresh practical idea of God is a rising in the scale of being and bliss ; every conquest over sense, appetite, and sin, is a widening and strengthening of our spiritual sovereignty ; every devout sentiment, earnest resolve, and generous sacrifice, attune our natures to higher music. Without holiness, what are we ? Empalaced and enthroned, with an empire at our feet, we are but decorated dust—lost men—“children of the wicked one.”

“Had I a throne above the rest,
Where angels or archangels dwell,
One sin unslain within my breast
Would make that heaven as dark as hell.”

Analysis of Homily the Forty-ninth.

"There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy."—
JAMES IV. 12.

SUBJECT:—*The Lawgiver.*

I. HIS PRE-EMINENCE. "One lawgiver." There are many in the universe, but there is ONE above all. (1) *His authority is underived.* All other legislators act on trust; they are responsible to some one—He to none. His laws are neither from the *precedents* nor *suggestions* of others, but from himself. (2) *His laws are constitutional; they are written* in the very nature of the subject. Hence (1) they are unalterable. Human legislation is a history of changes, because it is not based upon the universal elements of humanity. (2) They involve their own sanction. No officer is necessary either to apprehend the transgressor, or to inflict the penalty: with the act come both the punishment and reward. (3) They are the ultimate standards of conduct. Things are good or evil, perilous or safe, according to their approximation to the laws of this ONE Lawgiver.

II. HIS PREROGATIVE. He is able to save and to destroy. There is no other being in the universe who can either *really* save or destroy. There are three classes of moral beings in the universe:—(1) *Those that he can destroy, but never will.* These are unfallen angels and sainted men. He could hush, by a volition, all the anthems of the holy worlds, but so long as holiness exists he will never do so. (2) *Those that he could save, but never will.* He could redeem the population of the nether world, but the Bible gives us to understand that he never will. (3) *Those that he can either save or destroy.* These are men on earth. If a human sovereign possess the prerogative to save a condemned criminal, and he nevertheless perish, it must be for one of three reasons. It must be either that he is indisposed to use it, or that it is not expedient for him to use it, or that the criminal spurns it. Neither of the two first will apply to God. The Bible declares his *willingness*, and the atonement makes it *expedient*.

The Genius of the Gospel.

(Continued from Vol. II., page 66.)

[Able expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are happily not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remark, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.]

SIXTH SECTION.—Matt. iv. 1—11.

Temptation of Christ; or, the Typal Battle of the Good.

WE have stated that there are four points of similarity between our Saviour's conflict in the wilderness, and that in which every good man is engaged; *it was a battle in the soul—a battle for dominion, a battle won by faith, and a battle resulting in glory.* Having discussed the first at considerable length, we proceed at once to the consideration of the remainder; and as we find our space so limited, and we are not disposed to carry on this subject to yet another number, must condense it to the utmost. We remark, then—

II. THAT IT WAS A BATTLE FOR DOMINION. “All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” The great end Diabolos sought in each attack, was the prostration of Christ's soul to the sway of his principles—the achieving of his infernal sovereignty over his inner being. This dominion meant at least two things: first, *the subordinating the spiritual to the material*—the getting of food, wealth, and power, at the sacrifice of great spiritual rights; and, secondly, *the subordinating of the divine to the self seeking*—having the sense of God and duty swamped by personal considerations. God's will renounced, and personal will adopted as the sovereign principle. If this be

the meaning, it follows that what was fruitlessly attempted with Christ, has succeeded in the case of humanity. Diabolos holds almost an absolute dominion. Everywhere the material is in the ascendancy—the body with its five senses is on the throne—*intellect, genius, and even conscience*, are its serfs. And everywhere is the divine will subordinated to the human! Alas, alas! the world has fallen down, and is now on its knees before Satan.

It is certainly here suggested *that this submission is the way to worldly possession*. I will give thee the world, says the EVIL ONE, “if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” Is it not a general truth, that man must prostrate all that is divine in his soul to material and selfish impulses if he would gain much of the world?—that the highest prizes of Mammon are awarded to souls on their knees in the dust before Diabolos? Wouldst thou get worldly wealth and greatness, my friend? Then remember that *moral prostration of soul* is the condition. “ALL THESE THINGS WILL I GIVE THEE, IF THOU WILT FALL DOWN AND WORSHIP ME.”

III. THAT IT IS A BATTLE WON BY FAITH. What was it that enabled Jesus to stand triumphantly against the powerful assaults of the arch-enemy of souls? Not miraculous, but moral power—power of faith. But faith in what? First. *Faith in the true source of existence*. “It is written” (Deut. viii. 3), “Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord;” or, as Olshausen has it, by “everything which proceedeth from the mouth of Jehovah.” The language may mean either that man requires something more from God than bread in order to live, or that God’s word or volition is the source of life. The former is true. Were we nothing but flesh and blood, bread might support us; but we are intellect—imagination—heart—conscience, and we crave for truth, beauty, goodness, God, as well as bread. Souls cannot feed on bread. But although this is a truth, the latter, we think, is the truth here taught. God’s “word,”

or will, is the source of life. He can sustain us without bread, and starve us with it. The words of his mouth are the springs of created being. This is a deep truth, and Christ grasped it with an earnest faith. Second. *Faith in the true meaning of Scripture.* When the tempter quoted the passage from the 91st Psalm, Christ saw, at once, its misapplication, and said, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God;" as if he had said, Every attempt to force Scripture to wrong application is to tempt—provoke—God; and this, it is written, thou shalt not do. True faith in the Bible is not a faith in its words or forms, or mere human interpretations, but its own spiritual meaning and true use. Third. *Faith in the true object of worship.* "For it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve;" as if he had said, There is but one Being in the universe before whom I can prostrate my soul, and that is God. Now, it was by faith in these things that he stood; and it is only by earnest, manly faith in these things that we can stand. Let these things be "WRITTEN," not merely on paper—on memory—on intellect, but on the broad and sunny tablet of every-day consciousness, and we shall stand against the wiles of the devil.

IV. THAT IT IS A BATTLE RESULTING IN GLORY. "Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him." His repulsion of the wicked was the attraction of the good. His high moral rectitude kept hell at bay and heaven in waiting. The coming of these angels to Christ suggests—(1) *that they are deeply interested in this moral conflict*; and (2) *that their society is given only to the conqueror.* Angels came and ministered to Christ, because he crushed the great antagonist of virtue, God, and the universe.

So Satan fell; and straight a fiery globe
Of angels, on full sail of wing, flew nigh,
Who, on their plummy vans, receive him soft
From his uneasy station, and upbore,
As on a floating couch, through the blithe air."

Glances at some of the Great Preachers of England.

No. II.—JEREMY TAYLOR.

CICERO somewhere tells us that he once saw the Iliad written upon a piece of parchment small enough to be enclosed in a nut-shell. One would naturally suppose that by the time the poor scribe, or “dominie,” of the day had completed his caligraphy, he was almost as blind as old Homer himself: at any rate, to have produced such a kernel must, *à priori*, have appeared almost as hopeless as the task we are now entering upon—namely, to write worthily, within the compass of ten or fifteen pages, concerning such a man as Jeremy Taylor. Oh, for the power of compression, mentally, which our aforesaid “dominie” possessed mechanically! Oh, for “a touch of the art” of the eastern “Magus,” who could compress into the size of a lady’s fan the tent which had sheltered an army of soldiers! A pane of glass from the Crystal Palace, a feather plucked from an eagle’s wing, a finger broken from the Venus de Medicis, would afford but a faint idea of that fairy mansion, that monarch bird, that queen of marbles; so our hasty “glance” at the works of the far-famed Jeremy Taylor can be but, indeed, an humble substitute for the productions themselves. Happy shall we be, and well rewarded, if this paper lead one of our thoughtful readers to study for himself the sermons and treatises of the good Bishop of Dromore.

Biographical Sketch.

The birthplace of Taylor was Cambridge, and his death-place was Lisburne, near Belfast, Ireland. He first saw the light in the year 1613, and closed his eyes upon it in 1667, having lived, therefore, about fifty-four years. A fever brought him to his end, and his natal month, August, was the month of the year in which he died. His father, we are told, was a barber; and though the barber of James the

First's time handled the lancet as well as the razor—being, in fact, a surgeon as well as shaver—yet, seeing that the barber's son lived to be a bishop, he must have risen in the world when he found himself at home in an episcopal palace. Good Bishop Heber seems to have been a little scandalized at the humble origin of his brother prelate—as if no “good thing could come out of Nazareth”—and exults to find that Jeremy Taylor “had some pretension to gentle blood;” that his family “held a respectable rank amongst the smaller gentry of Gloucestershire,” &c. But, says another biographer, “If Taylor's family had been, for untold generations, as obscure and as mean as any of those names in which the proudest pedigrees of Europe all originate, it could make not the slightest difference to his reputation. His light was his own, not reflected; he was destined to shed on his name a lustre which outshines all the blaze of heraldry. He was one of the few who can afford to dispense with adventitious rank, for he belonged to the aristocracy of genius.” It appears that Archbishop Laud was his patron in early life; and though a Puritan might have thought a lift from Lambeth suspicious, if not dangerous, yet Taylor seems to have derived no harm, but much good, from it—so far, at least, as the prosecution of his studies was concerned. He was educated in part at Caius College, Cambridge, and in part at All Souls, Oxford. To inquire whether Taylor was diligent in the acquisition of knowledge, is as needless as it is to inquire whether a miser is diligent in the acquisition of wealth, or whether the Mississippi is diligent in the acquisition of tributary streams; a more diligent learner never conned a lesson; a more voracious *helluo biblorum* never disturbed dust, cobweb, or spider. In the year 1638 he was appointed by Juxon, Bishop of London, to the rectory of Uppingham, in Rutlandshire, having been, some time before, appointed chaplain to Archbishop Laud. On the breaking out of the civil war, he, of course, joined the Court party, and continued a Loyalist to the last. A rigid Roundhead might, perhaps, find a few flaws in Taylor's

political consistency, but in such stormy times we must not expect *very* straight sailing; and certain it is, that the rector of Uppingham was far enough from being a "vicar of Bray." About this time he received the honour of a D.D. from Oxford. He was indebted for the laurels to the personal favour of the king; and poor Charles had now nothing more substantial with which to reward his clerical adherents. The diploma, however, was a poor compensation for the loss of his rectory, of which the Presbyterians, now powerful, ere long deprived him. The political tempests of the times sadly tossed him about, as the following characteristic and beautiful letter sufficiently shows:

"MY LORD,—In this great storm, which dashed the vessel of the church all in pieces, I have been cast upon the coast of Wales, and in a little boat thought to have enjoyed that rest and quietness, which in England, in a greater, I could not hope for. Here I cast anchor; and, thinking to ride safely, the storm followed me with so impetuous violence that it broke a cable, and I lost my anchor: and here again, I was exposed to the mercy of the sea, and the gentleness of an element that could neither distinguish things nor persons: and but that He who stilleth the raging of the sea, and the noise of his waves, and the madness of his people, had provided a plank for me, I had been lost to all the opportunities of content or study. But I know not whether I have been more preserved by the courtesies of my friends, or the gentleness and mercies of a noble enemy. 'And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.' And now, since I have come ashore, I have been gathering a few sticks to warm me, a few books to entertain my thoughts, and direct them from the perpetual meditations of my private troubles and public dyscrasy; but those which I could obtain were so few, and so impertinent, and unuseful to any great purposes, that I began to be sad upon a new stock, and full of apprehension that I should live unprofitably and die obscurely, and be forgotten, and my bones thrown into some common charnel-house, without any name or note to distinguish me from those who only served their generation by filling the number of citizens, and who could pretend to no thanks or reward from the public beyond '*jus trium liberorum*.'"—*Vide* Dedication of "Liberty of Prophesying" to Lord Christopher Hatton.

The reference to the "gentleness and mercies of a noble enemy" is noteworthy. "It is delightful to reflect that, as

in that ferocious struggle there were men capable of performing such kind offices to their foes, so there were others who, like Taylor, could gratefully record them." During his residence—or exile if you will—in Wales, he did what many other great men of that time were compelled to do—kept a school. Sir Roger de Coverley relates with reverence, to the "Spectator," that his grandfather was whipped by that prince of pedagogues, Dr. Busby, and that he himself, if he had not been a blockhead, might have realized the same honour. And is not one tempted to envy the Roundhead who could say, "I was taught the pence-table by the author of 'Paradise Lost'?" or the Cavalier who would rejoin, "And I learnt *hic, hæc, hoc*, under Doctor Jeremy Taylor"? In the year 1658—the last of Cromwell's life—we find Taylor in London; not in Whitehall, however, but in a more ancient place—the Tower. The publisher of his "Collection of Offices" had dared to prefix to the work a picture of Christ in prayer; and as the Parliament, in its *discerning* wisdom and *profound* piety, had declared all such "effigies" "scandalous," and "leading to idolatry," woe to poor Taylor! With the Restoration came in better times. He signed the declaration of the Loyalists of confidence in Monk and his government, and he had his reward. He received many marks of favour from Charles and his courtiers; and, at length, the cup of worldly honour and pious ambition was filled by his ascent to the episcopal bench. He was made Bishop of Dromore. Of the see of Dromore the *Papist* notes that it was established as early as the sixth century by one St. Colman, of whom, however, the "present witness no farther deposeth." The modern *poet* tells us that the see was filled in the last century by Dr. Percy, the learned collector of ancient English ballads; and the *politician* will remember, with a groan or a grim smile, according as he is Tory or Radical, that this bishopric, with nine others, was destroyed by Lord Stanley, now Earl Derby; and its funds, by virtue of 3 and 4 William IV., c. 37, vested in the Board of Ecclesiastical Commission.

Taylor entered upon his bishopric in 1661, but he soon found that even a palace is no protection against "the ills that flesh is heir to." "The clouds returned after the rain." His last days, like those of poor Eli, were embittered and shortened by the wickedness of his sons. One fell in a duel, and another became the companion of the infamous Buckingham. They brought down the grey hairs of their father with sorrow to the grave. Oh blessed truth, that there remained beyond the tomb a home for his weary soul: "There the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." There sin and sorrow are unknown; there his learning may be ever "amassing her stores," and his genius ever "emitting her splendours;" there his sublime imagination may ever be soaring, and his ardent piety ever be fanning her holy fires; there he may be aspiring to the knowledge of the mighty cherub, and the ceaseless ardour of the flaming seraph. My brother, may you and I meet him, and listen to him *there*; for though passing pleasant are his earthly utterances, his heavenly words will be sweet as "angels' food"—as pure as the "river of water of life, clear as crystal, [proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

We must defer our "glance" at Jeremy Taylor's "Works" until a future season, and content ourselves, for the present, with transcribing three noteworthy references to him. The first is by his friend, Dr. Rust, who preached his funeral sermon, and succeeded him in his bishopric; the second is by his excellent and eloquent biographer, Bishop Heber; the third is by that noble critic and historian—the "*decus et columnen*" of modern literature—Henry Hallam.

1. Dr. Rust's opinion of Jeremy Taylor:—

"This great prelate had the good humour of a gentleman, the eloquence of an orator, the fancy of a poet, the acuteness of a schoolman, the profoundness of a philosopher, the wisdom of a counsellor, the sagacity of a prophet, the reason of an angel, and the piety of a saint. He had devotion enough for a cloister, learning enough for a university, and wit enough for a college of *virtuosi*; and had his parts and

endowments been parcelled out among his poor clergy that be left behind him, it would perhaps have made one of the best dioceses in the world. But, alas! ‘our father! our father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.’”

The above is not *exactly* to our taste: it keeps rather too servilely to the stereotype text of nearly all funeral sermons: “*De mortuis nihil nisi bonum.*” Our chief reason for quoting it is, that Dr. Parr has selected the best portion, and employed it as a description of the character of Robert Hall.

2. Bishop Heber’s opinion of Taylor’s style of devotional writing:—

“Whether he describes the duties or dangers or hopes of men, or the mercy, power, and justice of the Most High: whether he exhorts or instructs his brethren, or offers up his supplications on their behalf to the common Father of all, his conceptions and his expressions belong to the loftiest and most sacred description of poetry, of which they only want what they cannot be said to need—the name and the metrical arrangement.”

3. Mr. Hallam:—

“An imagination essentially poetical, and sparing none of the decorations which, by critical rules; are deemed almost peculiar to verse; a warm tone of piety, sweetness and charity, and accumulation of circumstantial accessories, whenever he reasons, or persuades, or describes; an erudition pouring itself forth in quotations till his sermons become, in some places, almost a garland of flowers from all other writers, and especially from those of classical antiquity, never before so redundantly scattered from the pulpit; distinguished Taylor from his contemporaries by their degree, as they do from most of his successors by their kind. . . . He is the greatest ornament of the English pulpit up to the middle of the seventeenth century; and we have no reason to believe—or rather much reason to disbelieve—that he has any competitor in other languages.”

(To be continued.)

Theological and Pulpit Literature.

PREACHING.

“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”—1 COR. i. 21.

“The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.” “We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.”

From these passages, in which the apostle's thought is more expanded, it is evident that it is the “preaching of the cross,” and not the “preaching” simply, which is foolishness. The subject, and not the manner of setting it forth, clashed with human prejudice, and kindled human scorn. Critically, we are not justified in rendering the words “the preaching of foolishness;” but that is evidently the thought hidden in this condensed expression, and when we consider the context it can be regarded in no other light. Preaching is just the most wise, simple, and natural way of getting facts and principles before the understandings of men, and expressing them on the heart. There is nothing foolish, even in the most worldly judgment, in the *method*; that by the preaching of the cross of Christ, God should expect to reform society, and regenerate the world, might well fill Greek and Jew with wonder, the Church with admiration, and heaven with joy and praise. We shall endeavour to gather together some principle with regard to this mighty and efficacious instrument of impression and instruction, that we may teach ourselves and others what we are to expect from it, and discern the wisdom of Him who has instituted and perpetuated it in the world.

I. It seems to have been ordered by the Divine wisdom that

the Gospel should, as much as possible, avail itself of the *ordinary* channels of communication and influence in spreading through the world. This is very simple, but it is worth our while to study the meaning of it. The Gospel is a revelation from God, supernatural in its origin: like Christ, its genesis is from heaven; but as Christ became flesh, and subjected himself to all the simple and ordinary conditions of human existence—hungered and thirsted, fought, suffered, agonized, and died, without any supernatural effort to protect himself from the experience of the natural human condition to which he had bowed—so his Gospel, having once entered into the world, dispensed at once with all supernatural apparatus; was written in a book, as all other facts and doctrines are written; became subject to all the accidents and calamities, mutilation, mistranslation, neglect, oblivion, and the rest, which books are heir to; was talked about familiarly in human societies, questioned by human critical tribunals, preached by loving and believing disciples, impugned by malignant and scornful foes, and left—as far as any visible or tangible supernatural apparatus is concerned—to make its way, as other beliefs make their way, amongst men. All this might have been ordered otherwise. In the temple, the visible glory enshrined the ark of the law; and the absurd fables of the Jews, with regard to the septuagint version of the Old Testament, show that it was thought natural that some supernatural provision should be made for the true translation of even the letter of the Old Testament record. So under the New, a perpetual Divine illumination might have attended the very letters of the Gospel, constraining from every man the recognition of its Divine authorship and absolute claims. Many might think that this would have been an easy way of saving all the battles which have been fought about the New Testament for ages, and securing its instant and cordial acceptance. So thought not God. “*For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*”

It is in nowise the purpose of God to compel or to constrain belief in his record. Such belief as the thunders and lightnings of Sinai could compel would, in his estimation, be a poor tribute to his Son, and a weak exercise of belief, well-nigh worthless. The belief which he sought is the entire whole-hearted belief of the man, and so he presents his revelation quite simply and naturally to him, in books and by preaching, as other truths came to him; and leaves it to his Spirit, witnessing and striving within the human conscience, to make it the engrafted word able to save the soul. No doubt it is very humbling to carnal wisdom that this blessed truth, on which depend our eternal interests, should come to us so simply, that it should tell, as other histories do, of deeds done, of words spoken, sufferings borne, victories gained, by a man in the ordinary work-day world—very different, no doubt, from the marvels and glories which, in the heathen sacred books, attend the fabled actions of their incarnate gods—but this is God's wisdom. He seeks the acceptance of the heart, and so he clothes his Gospel in no trappings to catch the fancy; no flourish of trumpets precedes it to stir the spirits, and challenge admiration and homage; it speaks with a still small voice, which just demands quiet audience. If in that way, when man is in his calmest and serenest state, it can gain no credence, it passes by him in search of more genial hearts. And so by preaching it was to be disseminated. "*It was ordained to be preached unto all nations for the obedience of the faith.*" All believers preach their doctrines. It is not at all astonishing that those who believe should also preach. Moses preached; Samuel preached; Elijah preached; Socrates preached after a fashion; Cromwell preached; Loyola preached; Mahomet preached; Edmund Burke preached. Mazzini, Kossuth, Cobden, O'Connell, all preached in their way, and use this instrument as, on the whole, the best instrument for effecting an instant and practical impression on their fellow-men. It is not the teachers of Christianity alone who adopt this method: God taught them to adopt it because men had

already adopted it; and proved, by long trial, that, of all instruments, it was the fittest for their purposes who had an immediate and practical object in view in their communications with men. We say an "immediate and practical object," because this defines the uses of preaching. To the scientific man it is useless, or worse. Wherever the interest is merely speculative, and involves no immediate and important practical results to him who pursues it, spoken discourse generally only cumbers the matter. It excites the feelings and the fancy, and clouds the intellect when it should be clearest and calmest, for the consideration of that which is within its peculiar province, and in which its verdict is sought unbiassed by the influence of any other of the faculties or organs of which the human body is composed. Plato did not preach; Bacon did not preach; Newton did not preach; Kant did not preach. Written discourse was more handy to their purposes than spoken. They sought not to touch the springs of passion or emotion; their business, to a large extent, was with the intellect alone. But when men desire to bring even the most abstruse doctrines of science or philosophy to bear upon the practical life of men, and their vital interests, the philosophers become preachers, as Fichte and Coleridge; and the Divine wisdom is vindicated, in ordaining the preaching of the Gospel, as the means of spreading the knowledge and love of it through the world. Having seen how preaching comes to be adopted, let us examine—

II. The secret of its power.

1. It conveys, far better than any other vehicle, the affirmation of the whole man—his whole nature, his whole experience—to the matter which he desires to communicate. A man may make an affidavit of his belief in a book, may assert it in the most solemn manner, but it will lack the weight of *oral evidence*, to the worth of which courts of justice in all free countries will testify. Paul's life—in which we seem to hear him speak and plead—is the best

comment on his writings : we know the *man*—we know the worth of the record he has made. If a man wants to convince another of what is in his heart, he will try to get face to face with him : and why ? Because the face speaks as well as the lips and the tongue. The eyes speak, the cheek speaks, the tone speaks ; the whole body of the man, if he is deeply in earnest, becomes vocal, and tells in its gestures and emphases a tale that cannot lie. The man's voice, form, tone, puts the emphasis on the words which fall from his lips, and that emphasis is always right. We may not always read it, we may not always be capable of reading it, but persons of fine and pure perception can always tell you, from the aspect and utterance of the *man*, whether the words which the lips form at will are a lie or a truth. God has bound us together so closely—has made the word of truth from our heart and lip so precious, so needful to our fellow-men—that he has given this safeguard, and has made the *man* speak—whatever his lips may say—a speech that rarely lies. Here is the power of preaching. The soul's belief comes out, emanates, at every pore ; every glance, tone, gesture, is full of it ; and whatever may be the worth of the testimony of the man who is giving it—that is quite another matter ; preaching enables him to give it most perfectly, and to set the seal of his whole nature, his whole experience, to his words. Hence there must be a vivid and vital belief in the preacher before power passes out of his preaching, and the power will be proportioned to the extent to which the subject treated is capable of engrossing the whole soul of the preacher, and uniting all the varied expressions of his being into a single testimony to its truth. Therefore, of all preaching, the preaching of Christ's Gospel is the most potent : nothing concerns the being so deeply, so stirs its deepest passions, sternest convictions, warmest loves ; and on no theme is the honest testimony of one human soul so precious to another human soul as on that truth, in which all men have a common interest, most profound and pressing, and on which the

experience of one human being, if fairly and fully come at, is the type of the experience of the whole human world. "*We believe, and therefore speak,*" because we can make speech utter our belief in a manner more potent than the words we breathe, and because our belief concerns most nearly the vital interests of the whole human race.

2. Preaching brings into play all the affinities, sympathies, and affections of the being, and is therefore a most powerful instrument, where they can be in anywise helpful, in arriving at the truth. But what have they to do with truth? Much every way. A man greatly perplexed in intellect by speculations and theories on the non-existence of matter, is entitled to the evidence of his senses and sympathies, and intends to draw from them what comfort he can. Suppose a child, at home, has got into a fretful and irritated mood, got a fancy that he is neglected, that his father does not love him or care for him, and all seems to go wrong: demonstrations of many acts of kindness and care on the part of the parent would do something to cure him; but the real cure—the real arriving at the truth—will depend on the resuscitation of the dormant sympathies and affections of the heart. And if the heart has gone astray after vanities and false loves, books may do something, wise counsels may do something, but the voice of sympathy, and the pleadings of affection, will do more than anything to restore such an one to the truth. This is Man's case; and hence the *preaching* of the Gospel is the appointed means of cure. He needs to believe in the love of God. The pleadings of human pity and love will help him to feel it. He needs to have unsealed the fountains of deep emotion; the tones of tender entreaty will show their most hidden depths. He needs all the help which the yearnings of his heart, the aspirations of his spirit, the promptings of his gratitude, can give to the convictions of his conscience in the moral conflict. The preacher's tones, if touched himself, will touch his finer nature, and place him before the grand enigma of his moral being in a spirit and attitude most

favourable for its solution, by enlisting all that is best in him on the side of goodness and truth. Wherever help can come from man, to feeling right, and hoping right, in any perplexed inquiry, then the preaching of the living man will be a powerful agent in leading to the truth.

3. So much is true of all preaching. But in the preaching of the Gospel there is a source of special power which, so far, has not been touched—the principle of representation—the power to speak, the right to speak to men in the name of God. *“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ’s stead be ye reconciled to God.”*

I believe it to be natural to man to expect that God will speak to him. You may find traces of this belief all over the human world; and the power of such a preacher as Paul was the conviction that he could meet this desire, answer this expectation, and make men hear by his lips the voice of God—God speaking to men as the shepherd speaks to his sheep when he sees them wandering—as the father speaks to his child whom he sees going astray. The human preacher, through the uplifting of his human sympathies and affections, becoming God’s interpreter—understanding, in some sort, and uttering the yearnings, the compassion, the love, and the hope, of God’s heart. Nothing but speech can content them,—they must speak. If they withhold speech, they lose the most precious means of uttering the message of God. Christ could not simply behold from heaven the misery and agony of his sinful children, he must come down to earth to speak, to plead, to wrestle with them, that they might be saved; and Christ’s ambassadors—on higher grounds than the natural adaptation of preaching to produce impression—must speak, plead, warn, exhort, and strive with men, beseeching them, as with a deep personal interest, to be reconciled to God. The dignity of the preacher of the Gospel lies in his ambassadorship—the secret of his embassy lies in his sympathy with God. Whoso undertakes it, makes himself a debtor—a debtor to God, a debtor to men,

—to declare the whole Divine counsel, and to make the truth effectual, as far as human earnestness can do it ; “and the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,” to the conversion of human hearts to God.

III. The special preaching of the apostolic age.

It had its special character. We have some perfect and admirable specimens of apostolic preaching. We cannot but be struck with the extent to which witness predominates over argument. Even at Athens, where Paul might, if anywhere, have given the rein to his penetrating and cultivated intellect, dissected the systems, and exposed the defects of the philosophers, he makes a witnessing to certain great facts the very centre of his discourse, around which he gathers all its interest, and to which he hangs on its application. He seems to have felt that the great matter was to get certain facts to be believed, to bring them as facts into contact with the consciousness of his hearers, and then leave them to tell their tale, and make their own impressions. There was no wearisome and sickening repetition of the results which certain truths *ought* to produce, the experience which they *ought* to generate ; he unfolded them, and left them to work. Neither, on the other hand, was there any disposition to draw back those truths from the contemplation of his hearers, and make the doubts and difficulties they might suggest the topic of discourse. Everywhere the same simple, earnest, convincing narrative of what God had said, what God had done, what God had suffered, in this work-day world ; the same simple assurance that, if he could get men to receive these as facts, they would bear the most blessed fruits. It is the tale, the history, of God incarnate, of his mercy, his love, his truth, that Paul delivered, not speculation as to what that God might be or do, or might be expected to be or do, but the plain statement of what God had done, with all its difficulties and stumbling-blocks, to Greek and Jew, being fully sure that that was, after all, what men most wanted to hear—what would

prove the Gospel of God—glad news of God—to the most cultivated and intelligent, to the most ignorant and base of men. The very office of the apostles involved the power of bearing witness to the life, death, and resurrection of the Son of God; and their preaching was mainly a witnessing, to work a conviction of these facts into the world's conscience, and the world's heart. This is the striking characteristic of apostolic preaching. But was it special to those times, or does it sum up the whole work of a preacher now?

It will at once be conceded that the preacher at the present day has a widely different state of things to deal with. The facts are now universally accepted. Those who question them are the sceptics, the unbelievers in the faith of society, as the Christians were once called the sceptics in relation to the gods of Rome. Is reiteration of them our duty, or are there new directions opened by the wants of such an age as ours, in which the energy of the Christian preacher may more profitably be employed? It will be seen at once that every fact, received as such, suggests questions as to how it came to be a fact—how it stands related to other facts—whether it remodels our belief in other things, which we have accepted, perhaps, without sufficient caution—and whether it will itself bear the searching criticism of an intellect resolved, if there be one, to discover and expose the flaw. The moment a *primâ facie* evidence of a fact compels us to accept it and handle it, the office of the intellect commences. It has to inquire into its origin, history, relations, and credibility. Not otherwise is it with things spiritual. A new truth, announced as a fresh revelation from God, may be at once accepted by the heart, because it seems to supply its needs; but the mind will not let it rest there: it seizes it, inquires about its origin and credibility, sees how it stands related to other facts and truths, and only after keen criticism acquiesces in the judgment of the heart. For instance, the apostles preached Christianity as a Divine revelation; Christ as

God's sacrifice and man's priest. But the question at once arose—How? There is already a sacrifice and a priest ordained of God: how can there be a fresh one? Did the apostles neglect to give satisfaction to these, and still deeper, inquiries of the intellect concerning the Gospel of life and immortality? Did they content themselves with simply bearing witness to the facts, and leaving contradictions to explain themselves? By no means. They wrote the epistles to supplement the Gospel, to meet this very state of things, to explain difficulties, remove objections, and dissipate doubts, which could not but rise in the *minds* of those whose *hearts* had already wedded themselves to the truth. They recognized the office of the intellect in things spiritual, and endeavoured to meet its just claims to satisfaction, but their *preaching* remained full of witness to the living reality of the facts which are the Gospel; they felt that the satisfaction of the intellect was second altogether to the ministry which these proffered to the spiritual life. Intellect has been for eighteen centuries at work upon the Gospel, and while faith in it has grown mightily, these difficulties have accumulated too. The question, at the present day, presses very gravely on the preacher, how far shall he confine his witness to the facts of Christianity, and their practical influence?—how far shall he, in the track of the epistles, try to satisfy the wants of an inquiring, not to say, sceptical, age about the Gospel? Any absolute decision, one way or the other, would be foolish. Much depends on the mind of the man, much on the speciality of his position; but, on the whole, as a general principle, we conclude that it would be wise still for the preacher to take the apostle as his model, and deal more largely than is at present the tendency with the facts of the life of Christ, and the substantial realities of Christian truth. It were much to be desired if there could be a recognition of two classes of teachers in the Church—the preacher and the teacher; or if, in each great centre of intellectual and social activity, there could be one or two men specially qualified, and specially constituted, to deal with the intel-

lectual side of the question, and make the satisfaction of the inquiring intellect their chief concern. But, for myself, I do not look to the pulpit as the instrument for dealing with the scepticism of this or any other age. The battle must be fought out elsewhere. The work of the preacher is not so much with the combat as the combatant—to tend him, arm him, cheer him, and stimulate him to fight for victory. We cannot settle this question in the pulpit, which agitates the minds of our hearers, but we can help them to make the settlement more sure and speedy, by keeping their best nature under constant training, and strengthening their moral hold on the good and true. It may be said, and with a colour of justice, men have heard the tale of the Gospel so often that they do not realize it. It is an old song to them, floating mechanically through the brain, but leaving no record there; that we must try to interest them in other ways, and about other things, and then we shall get them to hear, with new interest, the tale of Christianity. Perhaps what we want most is the simple and vivid apprehension of these things ourselves—“*the love of God*,” “*the grace of the Lord Jesus*,” the cross, the tomb, the resurrection and ascension of Christ, and the coming of the Holy Ghost. Perhaps if they were less an old song to us, they would be less so to our hearers, and we should find it possible to waken those who seem to have heard of these facts till they make no impression, to a new and vivid apprehension of their reality and power. Then might we hopefully watch the progress of the struggle, if we had lodged a new belief in the reality of God’s love and mercy in human hearts. Perhaps the most besetting sin of the preachers of the age is the notion that they can settle questions which every heart must settle for itself; and while men of keen, bright intellect render us noble service by unmasking and exposing the sophists who, with such easy assurance, lead multitudes astray, *they* are not working ill for Christ, or for truth, who lend themselves, in their preaching, to the work of twining more closely around Christ the tendrils of hearts’ affections, and

leave the great intellectual battle to be fought out with the heart on the right side. It is impossible, in a little space like this, to do more than glance at the many things that crowd upon the thoughts; but the circumstances and need of the age seem to us to call for a more practical, and not a less practical, preaching. The human voice is never so touching, never so potent, as when it lends itself to the themes of pity, compassion, suffering, love. And what pity! what suffering! what love! Here is our secret of strength as preachers. Teachers there may be who may consider other things. We ourselves may don the garb of the teacher sometimes, and address ourselves to the intellects of men; but if we want to make our voice and utterance—the whole utterance of the man—tell best, reach farthest, swell deepest, let us breathe through it the theme which lends to it its most rich expression—its most constraining power. “*God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*”

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LITERARY NOTICES.

SKETCHES FROM THE CROSS; a Review of the Characters connected with the Crucifixion of our Lord. To which is added, a Notice of the Character of Balaam. By JOHN JORDAN DAVIES. Ward and Co.

ALTHOUGH the central theme of this book is suited to break up other and deeper depths of thought than it contains, and to kindle other more glowing and luminous soul-fires than radiate on its pages, we have, nevertheless, a high estimate of it. It is free alike from theological platitudes and ambitious originalities. The writer displays a considerable acquaintance with the anatomy of the heart, and an unfeigned sympathy with the real and the true. The style is evidently natural, and therefore good. It is the real face of the author's soul, without grimace or paint. We can say of this book—what we can say but of few now-a-days—that it has suggested profitable trains of thought.

TRUE RELIGION DELINEATED; or, Experimental Religion Distinguished from Formality and Enthusiasm. By JOSEPH BELLAMY, D.D. Ward and Co.

OUR reading experience does not incline us to join with those pulpit antiquaries who desire to fill the modern market with "old divinity," and to robe young preachers with costumes of thought hoary with the breath of centuries, and, for the most part, of too frail a texture and scanty in make for the manly limb and varied labour of the nineteenth century. Albeit, such a work as that now before us—recommended, as it is, by such a metaphysical divine as Jonathan Edwards—we regard as well deserving the attention of the theological student.

THE SOUL'S ARENA; or, Views of Man's Great Contest. By WILLIAM BATHGATE. Ward and Co.

THIS is the book of a man who is evidently penetrated with solemn views of life. To our author life is no day-dream, or holiday, or routine of manual action, but a battle—a real, earnest, unremitting, awful battle. There is the stirring, agile, hearty air of a contest on every page. As an expression of deep and genuine earnestness—so rare, and yet so valuable and seemingly, in religious literature—we prize and recommend it.

TWENTY SERMONS, by the late REV. DAVID CHARLES, of Caermarthen. Ward and Co.

THESE are the discourses of a good man, who, in his vernacular speech, could fan "Welsh fire" into truth-revealing flames, and make assembled thousands trembling alive to the scene; but his thoughts, as they stand in the cold English type before us, do not, certainly, either warm or enlighten. Perhaps the vehicle is too contracted and cold to convey the great fiery thoughts of a Welsh soul. At any rate, the range of observation in this book is too narrow, the utterance too dogmatic, and the sympathies too clannish, to suit our notions of what discourses should be on that Divine Volume, whose sweep is immeasurable, whose forms of expression are sublimely suggestive, and whose sympathies encircle the world. It may, however, be serviceable for the very little ones of the little flock

REPORT OF A DISCUSSION, carried on by HENRY TOWNLEY and GEORGE HOLYOAKE, on the Question, Is there Sufficient Proof of the Existence of a God; that is, of a Being Distinct from Nature? Ward and Co

THIS book answers two important purposes: it shows the possibility of theological disputants maintaining a good temper, and the impossibility of logic settling such a question as the one discussed. Controversy on this theme seems to us solemn trifling.

THE MAN OF GOD; or, Manual for Young Men contemplating the Christian Ministry. By JOHN TYNDAL. Ward and Co.

IN the "good time coming," when men and books shall be appreciated according to their intellectual and spiritual worth, such a book as this will occupy a high position; and flimsy ephemerals, that sway their sceptre now, will be scouted as insults to the disciplined understandings of humanity. We heartily commend this book. Its aim is high, its counsels are weighty. The author's mien is grave, earnest, and dignified.



A HOMILY

ON

The Plan of God.

“O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”—**JER. x. 23.**

PARALLEL TEXTS.—“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighted in his way.”—**PSA. xxxvii. 23.** “A man’s heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps.”—**PROV. xvi. 9.** “Man’s goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?”—**PROV. xx. 24.**

NEXT to the weakness of our nature, which renders it impossible for us to fulfil the righteous law of God, there is nothing more painful than our inability to realize even our own idea of life. Perhaps sorrow for not being able to accomplish what we *desire* has in it an element more poignant than even repentance for not having done what we ought; because this sorrow, having a character less defined and less spiritual than repentance, finds little in the Gospel either to condemn or to correct the evil. Such an one may contemplate with peace—although with a peace bathed in tears of sorrow and of love—the sins of his life, now expiated by the sacrifice of the cross, who is nevertheless not yet entirely resigned to his embarrassed career, to natural endowments without an object, to hopes of happiness overturned—what do I know? at least, perhaps not resigned to a union, a position, a grace, which he has sought earnestly without having obtained it.

The bitterness of this regret arises not only from the value we attach to the objects of an unfruitful pursuit, it is also—it is chiefly—in the barrenness of the pursuit itself. For to a mind such as ours, capable of resolving with deci-

sion, and of acting with energy, it is a cruel disappointment to see one's plans overturned, even the most laudable, and to find the rock of Sisyphus in almost every stone, great or small, which we labour to roll up the mountain's side. Warned by so many sorrowful experiences, man begins at last to doubt himself which is the greatest of all humiliations, and the greatest of all sorrows. For confidence is the condition of power; and as unshaken faith in success is that which makes men powerful in all their schemes, so it is despair of results which make those powerless and timid men of whom society is full. I would that I need not add, —and those weak and timid Christians by whom the Church is embarrassed.

Touching this conviction of our impotency, behold here a great thinker, a great saint, and a great prophet, who par-takes it but only to relieve it. Instead of deploring in this weakness *a thing which exists*, Jeremiah, at the same time, recognises in it the thing *which ought to be*. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "I know"—literally, "I have known." Behold the language of reflection. "O Lord"—behold the spirit of prayer. The weakness which troubles *you* is to Jeremiah a truth of experience and faith. It is not that this truth may not be, even for him, mingled with bitterness; it is in the bosom of bitterness itself that it appears to him, separated as it is from the threatenings which God put into his mouth against his countrymen.*

It is at the sight of the tabernacle of Judah overturned, and her children carried captive: it is at the noise of the footsteps of the enemy, descending like an eagle on his

* By this twofold relation of the prophet—where the twofold nature of the Son of God, that Prophet of prophets, seems to be reflected—Jeremiah represents God near his people, and his people near him. It is thus we see him alternately identifying himself with God, who speaks by him when he espouses his just anger, or with the people whose flesh and blood he is, when he appears to suffer himself all that he threatens. All through the marvellous dialogue of this chapter—where the word passes, without perceptible transition, from him who strikes to him who is struck—Jeremiah loses sight of himself as much before the God he announces as the people whom he personifies.

country to convert the cities of Judea into a desert; that Jeremiah, personifying in himself all its people, breaks forth at first into lamentation. "My hurt, my wound is grievous; but I said, Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it;" after which he arrests himself, recalls his thoughts, and recovers himself, in this tranquil expression of profound sorrow: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

But, in the midst of this sorrow, do you not perceive the foundation of peace and hope?—that God, in whose hands we all are, is a God of mercy, and this mercy pervades his most rigorous judgments? Thus the inspired prophet reposes in the thought that it is *God* who directs us, and not we ourselves. He reposes in this even under the strokes of his severest displeasure, because that displeasure assumes a paternal character towards them that trust in him. "O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing." Then, as a faithful prophet—who, in his life and in his sorrows, like another David or Solomon, only recounts his salutary experiences for the good of humanity—he transmits to all posterity, as a proof of humiliation, and yet of encouragement, this celestial maxim:—" *Man accomplishes in his life not his own individual plan, but the plan of God, who triumphs even unto the end.*" Let us enter more thoroughly now upon this thought.

A creature intelligent and responsible, I know how to propose an end to myself, and to take means towards its accomplishment. It is thus I make a plan for the development of my faculties, for the selection of my career, for the education of my family, and for the government of my household. But though capable of willing and of acting, I cannot arrange at my own discretion either things, events, or myself; and if sometimes my plans succeed, much more frequently do they fail. This weakness is so inherent in my movements, and entails so much failure, that my real life contrasts painfully with my ideal. It is at this moment that Jeremiah interposes to show me, in the derangement

of *my* plan, a law directing me to a higher plan—namely, the plan of God for me—a *perfect plan*, which is far better than mine, both as it regards my general interests, and probably my personal advantage; a *powerful plan*, which infallibly accomplishes itself, whatever may be the destinies and vicissitudes of mine; and an *all-controlling plan*—pardon the expression—which reigns supremely over mine, and is intended to rectify it.

From this time, that which calls itself overturned in my plan takes the name of success in that of God: as in those pictures of tapestry that are worked from behind, the coloured threads, which the workman weaves with a skilful hand, present an appearance of inextricable confusion, until they are seen on their true side, which is that not of the workman, but of the artist; so the plan of man is on the wrong side of life—that of God is on the right. Regarded thus, my action is never without law, nor without result, for I am always accomplishing the plan of God, knowing it or not, let us rather say, willing it or not. If I proceed in harmony with God, I prosper, and I accomplish his plan, thinking, at the same time, that I am only accomplishing my own; if I proceed in disharmony with him, I am baffled; but still I am accomplishing *his* plan by the reversal of mine; and, failing to serve him by obedience, I serve him by my disobedience, for “all things wait on him.”

Are we, then, quietists or fatalists? Are we *quietists*, and, under the pretence that God can do what he pleases, do we disregard the operation of man, and demand that he wait, with folded arms, the development of the plan Divine? Far from us be such a thought! Man *can* do much—probably more than any of us has ever realized or conceived. This abandonment* would be for him to forego his most glorious privilege, and, at the same time, his most sacred duties. But by a mystery, which none of us can ever fully penetrate here below, human operation has free play in the

* “Ce laisser aller.”

vast bosom of the Divine will, which isolates it, and, if I may venture so to express myself, respects it all the time it is under control. On the other hand, are we *fatalists*? and, under the dark shadow of the thought that God disposes as he pleases of the universe, do we deny the freedom of man, with that moral responsibility which attaches to it? Far less! To deny the freedom of man, to suppose a constraint in his disobedience, or even in his obedience, this would be to reverse the foundations of all morality, of all religion, and specially of the Christian religion.

But by a second mystery more impenetrable than the first, human freedom walks at large, without parting with a single right, along with Divine sovereignty, which regulates it without force, and directs it without constraint. Let us not enter more deeply into this twofold problem, which philosophy has always found inscrutable, and which the Scriptures themselves have left unexplained. Just to state, as co-existent facts, the real operation of man, and the absolute sovereignty of God, is all that we are able to do; and it is a sufficiently glorious prerogative for one to be created, and to be made capable of willing and of doing, without pretending to absorb in the initiative *borrowed*, the initiative *creating*, from which that emanated. However that may be, I find myself, at all times, depending upon the two plans whose secret connexions elude my search—the plan of God, and my own personal plan. But the first of these plans accomplishes itself infallibly, either with the other, or without the other, and even against the other, governing it always without crushing it at once. In short, it cannot be expressed with more precision, or with more truth, than in the words of Solomon:—“A man’s heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps.”

Experience will enable us to illustrate this profound doctrine. The history of peoples, of great men, and even of every day, discovers alike, to an attentive observer, God’s plan, deciding all others without interfering with the free operations of man.

The people, of all others, who can furnish me with the best illustration are the Israelites. Their history, through the arrangement of God, is rendered more intelligible than others by the covenant he made with them, and more obvious by the revelations of his word; and both of these place in equal light not only that freedom, which they seldom used except to thwart the purposes of heavenly mercy, but also the sovereignty of God, which employed them up to the day of Calvary, "*to do all things that his hand and his counsel had before determined to be done.*" *

But to mention an example less frequently quoted, let us take that wondrous city which has been, by turns, the political centre of the ancient, and the religious centre of the modern, world, and which, although its star is set, possesses still the terrible prerogative of not being able to comprehend those inward convulsions, which have had no counterpart in all Christendom. If anywhere there had ever been the appearance of a plan exclusively belonging to man, it was in *heathen* Rome, spreading from people to people the network of that *political* ascendancy, which appears, for a long time, to be endowed with the singular prerogative of strengthening itself by extension; or in *Christian* Rome, spreading from church to church the more subtle network of *religious* ascendancy, which we see by turns, or rather which we see at the same time, and in the same places, energetically repulsed, and tamely submitted to, if not courted.

But when we observe this more closely, we discover at a glance, in all that has happened to one and to the other Rome, the marks of a plan which has not originated in the judgment of man, but which takes from a higher region its period of departure and approach. It must be left to a scholar, translating his "*De Viris Illustribus*," or to the prejudiced disciples of a selfish course of religious training, to take that point of view, so deficient in historic compass, which gives to the first consuls of Rome *Pagan* the idea of

* Acts iv. 28.

a universal empire, or to the first bishops of Rome *Christian* the idea of a church at once Rome and universal.

The one and the other plans have been in course of development from those remote periods, when each began to reveal itself—rather let me say to impose itself—on the men whose mission it was to discover and to proclaim it. An instalment of the world, or of the church, was already in the hands of Rome long before a Julius Cæsar or a Gregory the Seventh that dreamt of mastering the whole: and the consideration of that which had been done was only able to suggest, alike to their ambition and their genius, the thought of that which remained to be done. It was not the men who made the plan—it was the plan that made the men; and the men have no other honour than that of obeying with intelligence the guidance which others have followed without comprehending it. With more intelligence still shall be repeated, by each in his own manner, that which Jeremiah affirms in my text: as this profound utterance has been verified by the last of the Cæsars awaiting the last days of Rome imperial; and when that which is yet to be fulfilled, by the last of the Popes awaiting the terrible overthrow of Rome pontifical, when spiritual Christendom shall reign with its Saviour King. “O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”

But let us narrow the field of our observation. Let us contemplate one of those men whom the world honours by the name of great, on account of the lasting impression he makes upon society. When, in our own times, we have described great men as fatally obeying the spirit of their age, which they have embodied, we have lost sight of human will and human liberty; but even this error itself teaches us how much is visible in the life of those giants of history, alongside and underneath their own free movement, of a plan which reveals itself, and, far more than their own plan, makes them what they are.

Take away from any distinguished man his country, his

age, his education, and his sphere—all those things, in short, which do not depend on himself—and you remove from him, at the same moment, all the essential elements of his greatness. For, not to speak now of those grandly religious men, only consider how they have been the prepared instruments of God, who through them gave a new impulse to the affairs of his kingdom : a Moses, a Samuel, a St. Paul, a St. Augustin, a Luther, a Whitfield ; and then say if the plan realized by each of these is of himself, or of God. If my thought is not yet sufficiently manifest, let us take, as an example, Moses, the first well-known character who presents us with the history of religion.

Who more free, more energetic, more individual, than Moses, in his alternate conflicts with the king of Egypt, whose anger he braves ; or with Israel, whose obstinate resistance he overcomes ; or with the desert, whose sterility he renders fruitful ; or with heaven itself, whose vengeance he disarms ? Moses, this manifold man, at once sovereign, prophet, high priest, commissary, legislator, reformer, and founder of a new people—and of what a people, and at what a time ?

But think you that the plan executed by Moses was of his own origination ? Ah ! who could attribute such a plan to the mind of man without folly or impiety ? There was so little of Moses in it, that when it was first proposed to him by God, Moses began by obstinately refusing to acknowledge it, and by excusing himself under the plea of a slow tongue, and of speech not eloquent. The plan of Moses it was not, and could not have been, but it was the plan of that God who, before proposing it to Moses, had been preparing Moses to accomplish it by the education of two-thirds of his life. Eighty years of education for forty years of activity : “ is that the manner of man,” or of Him, whom a father in the Church has so well described as slow, because He is eternal ? Brought up in the palace of those same Pharaohs whose yoke he was at last to break from his people, and thus coming into daily contact with that twofold

power of kings and of priests, with both of which, in God's time, he was to wrestle, Moses was educating himself for a future career of which he knew nothing, just as a soldier is formed for the business of war by daily exercises in military science. Behold Moses thus trained for forty years!

Then, after a brief visit made to his brethren, he adds to the forty years passed in the study of Egypt forty years passed in the study of the desert, leading the flocks of Jethro, where afterwards he was to guide the flock of Jehovah. It was in one of these nomade excursions that brought him to the foot of Mount Sinai, and when he had almost arrived at the age of eighty years, which he himself assigns only to the most vigorous, that Moses, thinking, perhaps, that he had reached the limit of his career, and sorrowing that he had as yet rendered no service to his people, learned at last to comprehend the purpose of his past career, by which he had been prepared for Israel, for Egypt, for the desert; prepared, in short, for everything but for Canaan, which God foresaw he would never enter. Ah! when at the sight of this same Canaan, and after the forty years of real travail were ended, Moses sleeps with God, with what emphasis, think you, he would exclaim, in his last prayers, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

But let us approach our subject nearer: let us come to everyday life, and to that life considered in all that is most allied to our own being, and to our own doing; even there, what real part belongs to you in the arrangement of your domestic life? To begin at the beginning, does not a popular proverb teach us in how many ways the best-contrived conjugal relationships escape not only the control, but even the anticipations, of man? Life, health, family, property; yes, more—sympathy and mutual affection; on how many things do all these depend, which depend so little on you? "The lot is cast into the lap, but the decision is of the Lord."

But let us consider that which depends upon us most of all—the education of our children. Here is a son born unto

me : I exert over him, after God, the greatest power, material, intellectual, and spiritual, in the whole universe. One says, this child will become what I wish him to be, apart from that which is unforeseen—yes, the unforeseen ; but then, how much does that one word include ? France is to day what she was two years ago, except in that which was unforeseen ;*—but when, from this ideal of a son, fashioned after your desires, for a career of your own choice, you pass to the reality, what a descent ! Alas ! the mortifying difference between theory and practice : where is it so mortifying as in education, where the theory is the most liberal, the most expansive, the most self-reliant, and, at the same time, most severe towards all other theories, and the practice ?

But let us imagine a model education, such as that you and I imagined the day God gave to us our first child : activity, fidelity, prudence, labour, sacrifices, piety, prayers, examples—nothing shall be wanting. Even then—under conditions where you could not desire anything more for the happy development of your child, the object of such love and such solicitude—look at his *health* : a delicate constitution, a malformed body, a feeble voice, a dull ear, an imperfect vision : here is enough to overthrow all your *projects*. Or, on the other hand, should you force nature until it becomes a vessel broken at the fountain, through the nerves of the brain being overtaken, all your *hopes* are destroyed. Or take his *intellectual faculties* : a certain measure of aptitude is necessary for all labour, but this measure is not in everyone. Your child, forcing himself to gratify you, will probably languish over the task to which you have condemned him, until, slowly convinced of your mistake, you leave him to pursue his own peculiar vocation ; and it is this which will put new life into him, which will make him another man, and which will carry him beyond his rivals, only because he has escaped from your plan to enter again into that of God. Or take his *moral tendencies* : there again,

* This discourse was delivered in Paris, 13th January, 1850.

you are not absolute master. Instead of a child who is willing but not able, you may have a child that is able but not willing; "an idle son that causes shame;" upon whom you may exhaust all your resources of warning, of supplication, of exhortation, of chastisement, but without fruit. *The fruit, if you are faithful, will come in God's time*;* but only after God has led you thoroughly to see that it is God's, and that you yourself cannot hold in your own hands the heart of the child whom you have disciplined from the bosom of his mother. And then, *take his life*. I wish I could forget his life! *His life*! Alas! cut short, perhaps, at the beginning—at the moment his education was commencing; or perhaps—twice alas!—cut short in his prime, at the moment his education was finished. And what shall I say of opportunity, and example, and companionship, and masters, and fortune, and property, and the spirit of the age, and the legislation of his country, and the arrangements for public instruction, which perhaps you blame, and then comply with in spite of yourself? Oh! where is the man so blind as to imagine that he can determine the future of his son?

What are we to say of those educations that break all our arrangements?—those arrangements which sometimes fail after every possible precaution, and others which succeed when the precautions have been omitted, but where this omission appears to have favoured a truer and better development? Are we to say that, because our plan fails, everything is to be abandoned to circumstances, under pretence of leaving everything to God? No; by no means. There must be no occasion for self-reproach: there must rather be redoubled diligence and wisdom, along with the deep conviction that we are working for a plan which is wholly of God. But still, after all, education, this largest sphere of man's power, is also the scene of his greatest weakness: and there is no person on the face of the earth more fitted to repeat the lesson of Jeremiah than the father

* Prov. xxii. 6.

of a numerous family, entering, like Moses, into his rest, in sight of that unknown Canaan, into which the generation following enter. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Henceforth the maxim of our prophet—everywhere proclaimed in Scripture, agreeing with the soundest philosophy, perceived throughout the whole course of human experience, and, I may add, now passed into the popular proverb that *man proposes, but God disposes*—appears to us beyond all controversy, and without any other obscurity than that which lies at the foundation of all great moral questions. Human plans are governed by a plan divine, which accomplishes itself through man, without entrenching on his effectual free will or his moral liberty. But it would be of little advantage for us to have established this doctrine, if we could not point out the use which the Christian ought to make of it in the economy of life. This will be the object of the rest of this discourse, until there we reach a living and a notable conclusion. May the Spirit of God be our help!

The Christian has no simpler or safer method of entering into the spirit of a revealed doctrine than to consider it as seen in action in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, as come in the flesh; that model Man,* in whom all grand invisible truths are clothed in a visible body, and have received the breath of life. It is, then, in Him that we must discover again, or rather contemplate what ought to be, the practice of the maxim of Jeremiah, now become the maxim of Jesus, the Prophet of prophets, and the Saint of saints.

No one but Jesus Christ has ever completely realized the idea of my text; no one has ever been so completely ruled by a plan divine. Jesus does nothing, can do nothing, of himself. He does not proclaim his doctrine, but the doctrine of the Father who sent him; he seeks not his own glory, but the glory of the Father who sent him; he fulfils not his own will, but the will of the Father who sent him;

* "Cet homme type."

he says only the things which the Father has told him, and does only the things which the Father has commanded him. No one else has ever been so visibly prepared of God for the execution of a plan divine. The tribe of Jesus, his parentage, his birth-place; Bethlehem and its star; the shepherds and the magi; the flight into Egypt, and the retreat to Nazareth; the baptism of John, and the temptation in the desert; are all arranged by the Paternal hand;—of human preparation, of human plan, there is not a trace in the life of Jesus.

And yet by no one else has the will of man and his freedom ever been more fully demonstrated than by Jesus Christ. The same plan which appears to us as belonging only to the Father, who devised it, appears equally to belong to the Son, who accomplished it. From beginning to end—before his birth and after his death—Jesus does nothing that he is not willing to do. *Is he born of the human family?* It is because he himself has willed it: “being in the form of God, he humbled himself, and took upon himself the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men.” *Does he die after the manner of man?* It is because he himself wills it: “being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” What more shall I say? *Is he raised again from the dead?* It is because he himself wills it: “I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” And this testimony, the most remarkable he ever rendered to his own individual power, he ends—oh singular paradox!—by words which seem to contradict it: “This commandment have I received of my Father.”

There is but one solution possible to this problem:—If the Son realizes, at the same time, the plan of the Father, and his own personal plan, it is because the two plans are one; it is because the Son has so fully adopted the plan of the Father, that he has made it his own; even that plan which he appears alternately to accept and choose—according as we regard it in his obedience, or in his freedom—by

which means he accomplished the great law of human nature which Jeremiah has revealed in my text, but depriving it of all appearance of weakness or of necessity, being so much the more obedient as he was perfectly free, and so much the more free as he was perfectly obedient.

Behold the mystery we are seeking. "Go and do likewise." Of the two plans that are before you—that of God and your own—attempt only one of them; and not being able to impose your own plan on God, adopt his; not in the spirit of slavish constraint, but in that of filial submission. Does this plan involve things which *depend on you*? Then, do only that which you have reason to believe conformable to the plan of God. Instead of asking, when you are *choosing a future career*, what promises most success, most of "well-to-do-in-the-world," and most influence, ask, first of all, what is that which God has marked out for you, either by your qualifications, or by your preparation, or by those circumstances, or those inward impulses, which are so easily explicable to a faithful soul. Instead of asking, in the *formation of a new connexion*, what is that which will most gratify your ambitious ideas, or your projects of fortune-making, or your own self-will, ask, first of all, what is that which will most assist your growth in the life of God, and your accomplishment of his will upon the earth. Instead of asking, in the *education of a child*, what is the course patronised by usage, by opinion, by vanity, and by interest, ask, first of all, what is that which accords best with the indications of health, of faculties, of taste, and of the position which God has assigned you.

On the other hand, does this plan involve things which *do not depend on you*? Then, leave God to act, and let your comfort be that his plan arranges all. Leave to him alone the appointment of those joys and those sorrows which may come to you. The gifts, the comforts, which God has allowed you, enjoy them, even the smallest, with a heart all the happier, and all the more thankful, because it receives them from a Father's hand; but those things which he denies

you, even the most desired, and the most desirable, make the sacrifice of them, and repose in the thought that it is the same hand which has taken them away. On the other hand, those privations and losses which God spares you, do not go in search of them as counting them "blessed that are afflicted," but tremble lest, by going to look for trouble, you should sink under a self-imposed burden. But those trials He has sent you—should they still thwart you; in your dearest, most useful, most cherished projects—accept them as salutary discipline, appropriate to your spiritual training, and mercifully apportioned to your strength: in two words, look for the plan which God has formed for you; and when you have found it adopt it as your own, even as Christ has left us an example.

Do not tell me that you seek in vain to discover the plan of God: its discovery is promised to the simplicity of an upright heart. When a faithful soul, humbly penetrated with this word, "Man's goings are of the Lord: how can a man, then, understand his way?" has prayed thus: "Teach me the way in which I should walk, for thou art my God;" the Lord will answer such, "I *will* teach thee the way in which thou shouldst walk, and mine eyes shall be upon thee." It was thus that Jesus had no plan but that of God; for this plan reveals itself to him—rather let us say, gradually spreads itself out before him—day after day; and this path of good works, which God had marked out for him, develops itself, step by step, sometimes by a message addressed to him, sometimes by a circumstance which takes place, sometimes by a hidden sentiment, and sometimes by the spiritual or material necessities of his life, and all this with such spontaneity and such freedom, that the question which now pre-occupies you never seems to have troubled him. Have his spirit, and you will have his light: nature, men, events, everything, will be to you a course of divine instruction, where the fidelity which gives it will be proportioned to the fidelity which receives it.

If it forms part of the purpose of your Father to deprive

you, at some future time, again of the knowledge of his design, as if to bind you more tenderly and closely to himself, then remember, what does this matter after all? it is *less to discover the plan of God than to follow it*; and God has means to compel us to follow that plan, even when we do not discern it. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went;" but God knew, and that was enough. Walk thus by faith, and God will lead you, even in the darkest day, if only you desire that "his ways shall be your ways, and his thoughts your thoughts."

Thus, like Jesus, you will accomplish fully the plan of God, which is now become yours, whilst yours is one with his; and this will be for you, as it was for Jesus, the principle of perfect reconciliation between interests apparently opposed; for, on the one hand, accomplishing God's plan, you will feel yourself to be in order: and, on the other hand, accomplishing your own, you will feel yourself at liberty. This thought deserves a moment's attention; it is nothing less than the solution, simple as it is profound, of one of the greatest moral problems that have ever occupied the human conscience.

You will feel yourself in *harmony*, because you will be accomplishing the plan which is of God, and not of yourself. To perceive the truth of this position, invert the order of things, and suppose, on the contrary, that you have accomplished the plan which is of yourself, and not of God. What disharmony!—a disharmony unperceived, but most real, even when your plan is accomplished; a disharmony, striking and manifest every time your plan is frustrated. Let us make the most favourable supposition: let us suppose that the plan which you have laid out for yourself you will be permitted fully and invariably to accomplish. Even then—I ought, perhaps, to say especially then—what confusion! After all, we dare not conceal from ourselves that we are circumscribed creatures, who can only discern a few steps

before hand, and who can imagine nothing without its counterpart in time and in life. To commission such a creature to arrest the plan which ought to decide his existence, is to run the risk of dreadful disturbance in those numberless relations which meet in that existence, all circumscribed as it is.

But let us limit ourselves to man's mere personal interests, notwithstanding the narrowness of this point of view. To commission such a creature to arrest the plan which ought to regulate his life, is to impose on him a responsibility compared with which the punishment of Atlas, crushed beneath the weight of a world, might be envied. It is your own plan which decides your destiny? Then, truly, this unheard-of happiness is the greatest misfortune that could possibly befall you.* Your plan which decides! Have you fully estimated the incalculable chance, by which your actions, your words, and your thoughts may be frustrated. Your plan which decides! But who has guaranteed to you that your plan, be it good or better, should be the very best possible: for, at least, you cannot be, and ought not to be, fully satisfied with it yourself? Your plan which decides! But what is it, then, which robs you of repose by day and sleep by night? As for me, I would rather have to govern the world, even in its present state of confusion, than attempt to regulate the mighty plan, so prodigiously complicated, of my present and future being, material and spiritual. Your plan which decides! But, seriously, would you wish that it might do so? If God should make you the offer to regulate everything according to your plan, would you accept the offer? No!—a thousand times no! unless you are a child, or rather beside yourself. Ah! what sane man would have the courage to choose his own path, when each step he takes re-echoes into the depth of space and time—of time he cannot foresee, and of space he cannot discover? In the painful but pleasing deception of such a folly, who would

* Psalm lxxxi. 13.

dare to venture out of his position for fear of being crushed? And in this I see a true picture of the anguish which would follow this dreadful choice—man trembling lest his apparent should be mistaken for real interests, the visible for the invisible, and the little for the great; not knowing what to determine between the chances of action and the perils of quietude, and at last finding repose only by casting everything upon Him who knows the future as well as the present, the whole as well as the details, the depth as well as the surface; or, in other words, finding repose only in that which is to-day.

But let us take a more reasonable supposition, and one which will inevitably become true one time or another. Let us suppose your *plans fail*; that the machine, to the construction of which you have devoted your all, is shattered as a pitcher by the fountain, or the wheel at the cistern;—then what disorder, if you have never taken shelter in God's plan, which can realize itself without yours, and in spite of yours! what disorder, if all your expectations of earthly fortune are swept away at a stroke! what disorder, if all your dearest earthly ties be for ever sundered! what disorder, when you shall come to be removed, full of life, full of energy, full of projects, full of the future! like the young Chenier,* led to a death pre-

* THE YOUNG CHENIER.—I supply the following illustration of this passage from Lamartine's "History of the Girondists" (*Bohn's Edition*), vol. iii., pp. 410—524:—

"André Chenier, a Roman soul of the loftiest imagination, whose courageous patriotism had withdrawn him from poetry, to throw him into politics, had been imprisoned as a Girondist.

"The dreams of his splendid imagination had found their reality in Mademoiselle de Coigny, who was incarcerated in the same prison.

"André Chenier rendered to this young captive an adoration of enthusiasm and respect, endeared still more by the sinister shade of a precocious death, which already covered these dwellings. He addressed to her his immortal verses, *La Jeune Captive*, the most melodious sigh that ever issued from the apertures of a dungeon.

* * * * *

"The previous evening sixty-two heads had fallen between Robespierre's first harangue and his fall. Of this number was that of Roucher, author of *Les Mois* (The Months), those French *Fasti*, and that of the young poet, André Chenier, then the hope, and afterwards the everlasting

mature as it was frightful, but revealing his inward struggles beneath an undisturbed exterior, by the sad but ingenuous expression he uttered as he touched his forehead :—" Ah ! it is a pity, for I had something *here* ! "

But remove yourself into the plan of God : there all this disorder is repaired, and the answer that Chenier seeks, as he mounts the scaffold, is found there ! For in the vast purpose of God, who has all the resources of the universe at his control, with space infinite for its display, and time eternal for its development, there can be nothing ever irreparable, nothing hopeless, nothing unforeseen, nothing arbitrary. There is recovered all that had lost itself here ; there is revived all that had buried itself here ; there is continued all that had arrested itself here ; and there is raised again all that had died here. What do I say ? Rather let us add, it must lose itself to be recovered there ; it must bury itself to be revived there ; it must arrest itself to be continued there ; it must die to be raised again there as precious seed, which cannot flower and bring forth fruit in the plan of God except upon the condition of dying to our own plan. Thus the moment when a Jacob cries, shut up as he was within the narrow limits of his own plan, " All these things are against me ! " is the precise period when all those things were arranging themselves in the outspread and prescient plan of God, to prepare for him the profoundest joy which has ever throbbed within a father's heart.

But, instead of occupying time by fruitless attempts to paint the beauty of this doctrine, let us rather consider it regret, of French poesy. These two poets were seated side by side on the same bench, their hands fastened behind their backs. They conversed serenely of another world, disdainfully of that they were leaving. They turned away their eyes from the troop of slaves, and recited verses as immortal as their memories. They evinced the firmness of Socrates. André Chenier, when on the scaffold, striking his head against one of the posts of the guillotine, said, ' It is a pity, for I had something *here* ; '—sole but touching reproach to destiny, which complains not of life, but of genius cut off before its time. The punishment completed, Henriot returned with slow steps, and of a conqueror, through the faubourg. France, like the crazed Ophelia of Shakespeare, tore from her brow, and cast into the blood at her feet, the brightest ornaments of her crown."

as seen in him whose life converted it into history. What life was ever more governed, more penetrated—alas! more agonized—by the plan of God than that of Jesus? But where shall we discover a feeling of harmony and of peace so constant and so profound as in Christ Jesus, and in him crucified? It is enough for the well-beloved Son to know that the gracious plans of his Father must accomplish themselves in him. Behold how he commits himself to this plan of suffering as man has never suffered, sustaining himself by saying, “For this end am I come.” The word which he utters at last, “I have finished the work Thou hast given me to do,” this one word alone explains all. What now does it signify that he dies upon a cross, that he dies in the flower of his life, that he dies without leaving his disciples established, that he dies before his work is completed? It is not *his work* that he has come to do, but the work of his Father: that work is accomplished, or his Father would not have taken him away. The “something” which dies in Chenier is earthly, fugitive, and perhaps personal; the “something” which dies in Jesus is the salvation of the world, is the foundation of a heavenly kingdom, is the fulfilment of prophecy, is the destruction of the serpent, and the restoration of all things. Truly, the “something” which dies thus dies not at all; these germs conceal themselves only to be hidden in the bosom of the Father as in a fruitful soil, which shall restore them with usury. “Father, I commit my spirit into thy hands.” The hour of the cross—that hour of disorder, of confusion, and of darkness, in the region of human plans—is, in the circle of the plan divine, the hour of order, of harmony, and of deliverance. “All things are accomplished.”

But if there be peace only in order, so there is life only in liberty. Ah, well! in that line of conduct with which agree the precept of my text, and example of the Saviour, there you will find yourself, at the same time, in that liberty; because, in accomplishing the plan of God, you will also accomplish your own proper plan, which you have now

conformed to his;—not absolute, self-determined liberty, but all the liberty to which a creature can pretend. That absolute liberty which consists in accomplishing that which we will, without being governed by any one, or rendering account to any one, belongs only to God; and the only liberty of which we are capable consists in our associating with all our concerns this divine freedom, which we shall have *against* us if we pursue our own independent plan, but *for* us if we identify ourselves with the plan of God.

Do you pretend to a greater freedom than this which I have proposed to you? Would you wish to be independent, even of God, and to accomplish your own personal plan? Make the attempt! I give you *my* consent. It holds true, nevertheless, that there is “neither counsel, nor wisdom, nor understanding against the Lord.” Ah! when your plan and that of God shall encounter each other, and clash with each other—which cannot fail to happen if they are independent of each other—which of the two, I ask you, will be arrested, crushed, and reduced to atoms, before the other? Is that the liberty you demand? Let a stoic be contented with it, or feign himself to be contented, I can understand *him*; but a *Christian*!—Why, this is the liberty of the “horse, or of the mule, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto us;” or, if this image offends your refinement, it is the liberty of an undisciplined child, who sports imprudently on the iron rail, while behind him there comes, with the noise of thunder, the flash of lightning, and the swiftness of the thunderbolt, the train which will crush and tear him to pieces, roaring after its usual fashion, but never stopping in its course, for that is the march of the age, of men, of things—of each and of all.

Your true freedom will date from the period when, acknowledging “it is hard to kick against the pricks,” you accept the divine plan, appropriate it to yourself, and make it your own, not as a fatalist, by necessity, but as a Christian, by love. We speak improperly, or at least incorrectly, when we call this the sacrifice of our own plan, or

the giving up of our own will. To subordinate our plan to the divine is less to sacrifice it than to save it, for we begin to accomplish our plan when we are in unison with the Supreme plan, which accomplishes itself. To conform our will to the divine will is less to renounce it than to submit to it, for we begin to do what we wish when we will only what God wills, who alone can do all that he wills. If this subordination of our plan to his could be perfect, and this conformity of our will to his could be entire, there would be needed nothing more to make us infallible in our movements, even as God himself, according to that profound thought of Jesus Christ: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."*

This idea contains the deepest mysteries of the Gospel. God has formed an alliance with us, not as a master with his slave, but as a father with his son, whom he does not force into his designs, but whom he associates with them. It is as a Son that Jesus adopts his Father's designs and that he invites us to adopt them also. As a *Son*—behold the paradoxical word, for it is at once the word of submission, and yet of love. As a *Son*—one with his Father; the more there is of his own nature, and his own individuality, the more there is of his Father's nature and spirit. As a *Son*—because, in that relationship, dependence unites itself with freedom. Behold a slave tied by law, and retained by fear, to an invalid master, whose condition requires the most irksome attentions, who is altogether capricious and irritable, and whose morbid temperament renders doubly painful the fetters of servitude. With what a feeling of cruel necessity this unhappy man drags on his captivity! with what murderous impatience he longs for the period that shall release him from his prison! with what secret envy he beholds the bird as it flies from branch to branch, and sings in the foliage the hymn of *its* joy, or rather of *his* sorrows! Now, change this picture in one single feature, and in place of a

* John xv. 7.

slave, put there a *son* ! Is it not true that this son would yield to no one else the sad privilege of those attentions he bestows upon his father, finding in them I know not what charm which proportions itself to their sorrowfulness ? Is it not true that he cannot anticipate without fear the approaching day which will terminate this illness, and give to him that independence which will be a burden to him the remainder of his days ? But what will it be if the will of his father is goodness, wisdom, and holiness itself ? if his service is the want of the heart and the law of conscience ; if the father who commands is the heavenly Father, and the son who obeys is a child of God in Jesus Christ ? What grander view of liberty can the earth present while we anticipate that other dwelling, where every barrier shall be removed to make way for perfect freedom in boundless love ?

But, finally, you never realize this except by the contemplation of the life of Jesus, the only and well-beloved Son. Where has there ever been in the world a life more filial, more submissive, or more acquiescent, in the plan of God than the life of Christ ? and where has there ever been a life more personal, more individual, and more free than his ? He is *himself* just in proportion as he is identified with his Father, and—shall I venture to say it ?—so much the *more man* as he is *God* ! Thus he resolves in his own person the great problem of liberty without restriction by obedience without reserve, and reveals to the world what it has regarded as the most unostentatious, the most surrendering, the most yielding, obedience to his Father's will, as, at the same time, the most living, energetic, and vigorous life ever stamped upon the history of man !

Do you ask, how is this ? I reply, by filial love. Jesus does not sacrifice his own plan ; he realizes it in that of God. He does not abandon his own will ; he accomplishes it in that of God, free because he is a son ; and then bestowing as a part of that freedom, upon all that receive him, a filial spirit, by which they cry *Abba*, Father. Again, finally, to be conformed to this order, and to this liberty, I am demand-

ing from you that which does not consist with your own will, your own glory, your own power, your own sense of justice, or, in short, with anything that is natural to man. Yes, it consists wholly—and far more than we have ever thought, either you or I, because we have never attempted it—in a surrender to God, without restriction; and this is the great sacrifice—it is the crucifixion of the Christian life. Ah! it is that crucifixion which can only be learnt through “Christ crucified.”

Place yourself before that cross upon which he suffered all, and accomplished all, that he might fulfil the will of his Father, and there will never be anything in the divine plans which you will be unwilling either to do or to suffer. If the cross of Jesus Christ has not yet taught you this, it has taught you nothing; but if, on the other hand, you have only a spark of Christian faith and Christian life, your heart, so far from resisting the sentiment of my text, will anticipate it with a sacred anxiety. To realize the divine plan, whether it penetrates yours, that it may unite itself *with* them; or whether it overturns yours, that it may establish itself upon their ruins—this will be for you, I do not say simply a duty, but a privilege; nor yet simply a privilege, but a necessity—the hunger and thirst of your spirit; and you will henceforth substitute a living sympathy in the place of that cold admiration which hitherto you have accorded to that word of our Saviour: “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish his work.”*

I must conclude, even if I resume this elsewhere, and at another time. But, at the risk of appearing to forget the usages of the pulpit, how can I forbear to allude, on this occasion, to the special application my text receives from the France of 1850? Ah! if *I* were to hold my peace, the very stones would cry out. That the way of man does not depend upon himself; that it is not in the power of man who walketh to direct his steps;—why, if this great truth had

* John iv. 34.

not been announced in Scripture, and had not been taught by experience, and by the voice of the people, is it not brought to light by contemporaneous history? Does it not force itself upon us with all the authority of an historical axiom? Does it not start out of the earth at each step? Does it not descend from heaven in every storm? Does it not pass from mouth to mouth, and agitate all minds, even the most indifferent?

To direct his own steps! Ah! what man of wisdom would flatter himself that he could do so, after the things which we have seen, and, shall I add, upon the eve of what yet remains to be seen? Did those direct their own steps who have been precipitated from the highest honours of the state? or those who ascended to their place, only to fall in their turn? or those who have received the possessions of both—but for how long? Did those popular tumults direct their own steps—those tumults as prompt to return to order as they were prepared to sweep before them the foundations of the state; or those old vessels worn out—or shall I say, strengthened—by the travail of generations, re-appearing when we thought them swallowed up, and sailing with a new pride, perhaps before what new tempests?

But let us dismiss the future, and confine ourselves to the present. Two great questions are agitated—that of society, and of the church. Does that society direct its own steps which staggers like a drunken man, and can only find for those evils it deems incurable, remedies which make it worse? Does the Christian church direct its own steps, which aspires to a new life and to a new development, but not knowing where is its proper stand-point for this desired reform, stands on ground that sinks under its foot at every step, and under a sky which is covered with endless disapprobations?

Ah! what, then, is essential in order to be faithful to the spirit of Jeremiah, and to the example of Jesus Christ? Need we despair of our situation, and leave the tide to flow and things to go on as they list, and thus form no plans

either for the safety of society or the revival of the church? No! undoubtedly no! but recalling to mind what is written, "When I am weak, then am I strong," we must derive good from evil, and apply ourselves with redoubled energy to construct all our plans upon the plan of God, who not only can come to our aid, but who is able, sooner or later, to repair and to re-establish all things.

If society would replace itself on a solid foundation, it must be the plan of God that shall constitute its strength. That worldly wisdom which flatters itself that it is able to heal the wounds of society—either by the introduction of some unknown or chimerical panacea, or by the quiet and simple maintenance of that which is, just because it is—may be taught its folly by the lessons of the past. Ask of history, illustrated by revelation; of Scripture, received as the word of God; of prophecy, received as the premonition from on high in advance of the future;—ask them all what is the plan of God for the development of humanity, and for the advent and government of the Son of man? or, if such thoughts be too remote from the deliberations of princes, and from the demands of the people—if the plan of God is to be left out of sight in the counsels of contemporaneous policy—then may we tremble, lest we now see the beginning of the end, lest we should fall from abyss to abyss, and society be advancing only towards its final dissolution.

If the Christian Church is to regain *within* itself that consummate order which belongs to its holy vocation, or to regain *without* that position of renown which belongs to it in the judgment of the people, then the plan of God must preside over its reorganization. Preserve yourselves from being thrown, on the right hand, and on the left, into the first reforms which may present themselves to your mind, whether to reform its doctrine or its latitudinarian discipline. It is at this time we need much to ponder the path of our feet. Do you not perceive, do you not feel in your minds, a work as profound as it is extensive, which demands

measures at once so vast and so penetrating that God alone can take the formidable initiative? Listen, then, to him, interrogate him, wait upon him, if you sigh to understand to what new destiny, and by what means he will conduct his church. But if you are not capable of this faith, and of this patience—if you precipitate yourself into your own ways—then may we tremble lest everything should be marred, lest the choicest gifts should be dispensed in vain, lest the most holy aspirations should lose themselves in the air, lest the most noble efforts should be followed by unfruitfulness, and lest, from division to division, and from schism to schism, the church should terminate by reducing itself to atoms.

God of Jeremiah, and God of Jesus Christ! we have learnt that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and we have come to Thee to commit the guidance of our steps into thy hands! Chasten us, but in measure, and not in thy wrath, lest thou bring us to nothing! Let light from heaven dawn upon our obscurity, and reveal to us, in its midst, thy plan and thy purposes, into which we will henceforth enter without reserve. Put an end to our infinite perplexities, and our perpetual twilight-searchings—to our society without principle—to our church without public vigour—and to our Christianity without Christian life! Finally, O Lord, speak thyself in the place of him who now speaks. He has been taught himself that the word of man does not depend upon him, and that it is not in the power of him who speaks to direct his speech; and it is now upon Thee, and upon Thee alone, he waits to guide this people, and to guide himself, into the path wherein Thou shalt condescend to reveal Thyself.

ADOLPHE MONOD.

Paris.

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The Pulpit in the Family ;

OR,

A DOMESTIC HOMILY ON THE WORLD'S GUARDIAN

“For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.”—2 CHRON. xvi. 9.

THE world is no orphan. diminute and dimit may seem, travelling its azure way amid those far more magnificent and brilliant orbs that circle along the “immeasurable abyss;” still it has a Father, whose “eyes” of all-searching knowledge and watchful love are on it evermore: on its heart-pulsations and hidden elements, as well as on its outward events and forms. The doctrine accords with the fairest deductions of reason, the consciousness of humanity, the native cravings of the heart, as well as with the concurrent revelations of this Book. Rather than philosophically discuss,* let us devoutly meditate upon this wonderful theme—*God the Guardian of the world*. The passage teaches—

1. THAT GOD’S GUARDIANSHIP OF THE WORLD IS UNIVERSALLY INSPECTIVE. “The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the *whole* earth.” The eye is the biblical symbol for knowledge. Some of the celestial intelligences are represented as being “full of eyes,” to indicate their knowledge. If they are “full of eyes,” God is *all* eye. He sees the *whole* of a thing. Of those objects with which we are most acquainted, we know but a little of their *outside*: the essence of everthing is hid beneath an impenetrable

* As this homily is designed especially for families, discussion is not deemed so suitable as meditation.

veil from us, but his eye throws its flaming glance into the inner heart of things—into the deepest and darkest abyss of being. He sees the *whole of everything*. Few, indeed, are the things we are permitted to see even the outside of. *Space limits us*. Our widest horizon is not a handbreath to the heavens as compared with the universe. Could we take within our glance the whole globe, even then we should see but the exterior of one of the smallest shells of being that crowd, in pearly lustre, the shores of immensity. *Duration limits us*. Wonderful things were transpiring, even on this planet, ages ere we woke into conscious thought. Poor mortals! our day of observation is very short. We open our eyes; a few wavelets of that mighty river of being, that rolled in calm and copious flow ere Adam sinned or angels fell, glide at our feet, impress our senses, arrest our thoughts, stir our inquiries, and we are gone; we fall into the sweeping, swelling current, and are seen no more. But neither *space* nor *duration* limits the knowledge of God; he is in all places; he exists through all times. Whatever is, has been, will be, or can be, are in his eye. All actualities and possibilities are there. "All things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do." His eyes "run to and fro throughout the whole earth." O my soul, would thou wert penetrated with this truth! would that it dwelt in thee as an ever-living force! that it were enthroned within thee! It would break the power of the most potent temptations that assailed thee. If the eye of a child has sometimes been known to paralyse the arm and frustrate the intentions of him who has been bent on some criminal deed, how would not the lightning glance of God check thee from all evil? It would invest thee with a triumphant power under all trials and in all duties, for in the greatest sufferings thou wouldst say, "He knoweth my frame, and remembereth that I am dust;" and in the most trying undertakings, "He knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." It would give a glorious meaning and a thrilling interest to thine earthly life.

It would make the world a scene bursting with stirring ideas and quickening inspirations, the journey of life a walk with God, and all objects to thee the symbols, and all sounds the voice, of the eternal Deity that "fillet all in all."

The passage teaches—

II. THAT GOD'S GUARDIANSHIP OF THE WORLD IS PERSONALLY EXERCISED. He does not watch and superintend the world through the instrumentality of others; *his* eyes, his own eyes, are employed. He does not, like human potentates, get a knowledge of his empire by hearsay and report, but by his own personal inspection. It is a glorious truth that God *himself* is in our world. He is not merely here by REPRESENTATION—he has millions of agents at work both in the material and spiritual world. But he does not look after the universe as parents after their children, merchants after their business, monarchs after their dominions—by *proxy*. He employs others, it is true, but he is with them and *in* them—the force of all causes, the motive of all motives. Nor is he here merely by INFLUENCE, just as the author is in the book, or as the telegraphic officer is at the time wherever he transmits his message. A semi-philosophy, indeed, often speaks as if this were the case—as if God were only here as he acts upon the telegraphic wire of secondary causes. It refers all the operations and phenomena of this wonderful universe to "laws." Those heavenly bodies, which fill thoughtful minds, as they "gaze upon them shining," with unutterable emotions, and seem to engulf the spirit into its own immeasurable vastness, we are told, radiate and revolve by law. This terraqueous globe, now in the terrible grandeur of storm, and now in the placid majesty of repose; now in wintry desolation, and now in summer's luxuriance and fruit; are all referred to "laws." Man is born, sustained, enjoys, suffers, lives, and dies, by "laws." O ye sages of nature, we honour the mission to which you concentrate your noble power: we look at you with a reverential eye, and a thankful heart, as you

search into the arcana of things. The results of your noble efforts are at once the sources and the stimulus of material civilization. But we mourn when we find that your labours tend, religiously, to keep humanity down in the cold region of secondary causes; that some of your theories veil from man the eternal ALPHA. Ascend, we pray you, a step higher in your inquiries; pass on from the outer court; do in the great temple of nature what a mystic hand did of old in the temple of Judea when the world's Redeemer died—rend the dark veil, expose the “Holy of holies,” and let the rays of the shekinah blaze through all.

Blessed thought! the great Father of the world is here, not merely by *representation* or *influence*, but in *person*. The world has not only his agents and his works, but his *eyes*—his all-seeing Self is here. In all the scenes of my mortal life—in the quiet fields of holy nature, and in the bustle of merchandise—in the solitude of the chamber, and in the loving circle of family and friends, may the idea possess me “that the Lord is at hand;” that, whoever is absent, the absolute One is ever present, bestowing every blessing, marking every movement, directing every event, demanding the homage of every throbbing passion, passing sentiment, and fleeting thought!

III. THAT GOD'S GUARDIANSHIP OF THE WORLD IS MORALLY DESIGNED. Why does he thus so sedulously and constantly guard the world? “To show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.”* He shows

* The circumstances which occasioned these words may be briefly stated:—Baasha, king of Israel, begins to fortify Ramah, a city about twelve miles from Jerusalem, the capital of Judea. The design of this, it would seem, was to hinder the men of Israel from returning to Judah, should they renounce his authority, and connect themselves once more with the kingdom from which they had revolted. The reformation which Asa, the reigning king of Judah, had effected, would be likely to tempt the men of Israel to this step. Hence the undertaking of Baasha. Asa, however, to thwart the purpose of Israel's king, entered into treaty with Ben-hadad, a neighbouring and heathen king, to invade the territory of Israel, in order to draw away the attention of its king from the building he had commenced; whereupon God sends Hanani,

himself strong to sustain, defend, guide, and bless with every good, those whose hearts are "perfect toward him." God guards the universe for the interests of the good. Yonder, embosomed in nature's loveliest region, stored with luxuries and wealth, and embellished, within and without, with the highest forms of artistic taste and skill, stands the magnificent mansion of one who dwells in richest affluence, calling the wide-spread acres around, and the neighbouring villages and towns, his own. In one of its quiet and elegant chambers, stretched on its little bed, lies a suffering child, with death's glare in its eye, and pallor in its cheek. It is the son of the lordly proprietor and tenant. What engages most of the rich father's attention, and engrosses most of his heart? It is that little sufferer. Its little wants are the mightiest law to him; its fleeting smiles charm him more than ought besides; its symptoms hush him into breathless solicitude. He sees no beauty, and feels no attraction, but in him. Willingly would he exchange his princely home for a peasant's cot, could he but rear to manhood that afflicted child. It is somewhat thus with the everlasting Father. It is not material nature in any of its wondrous combinations of beauty and sublimity, not blooming landscapes, mighty oceans, starry spheres, revolving worlds, or refulgent systems, that interest him most. No; it is his adopted ones, his loving children, though little and afflicted, that engage his sympathies. He says, in effect, I keep up the machinery of the universe only for the good of my children. I have no affection for it, "but for the saints that are in the earth, in whom is all my delight:" wherever they are, "mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually;" I will cause all things to work together for their good. I

the seer of Asa, to threaten him with war because in his difficulty he had applied to a heathen prince rather than to himself—the Lord of hosts. The prophet, to point out the full magnitude of Asa's guilt, reminds him of the former displays of God's mercy to him, and also that his conduct was a disparagement of the superintendence of that God whose "eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him."

will keep material systems in existence, that in the dispensation of the fulness of time, I might gather together in one all things in Christ.

This subject teaches—

First. *The true spirit of life.* If God is the all-seeing Guardian of the world, whose eyes pierce into every avenue of existence, what should be the spirit of life? Not the spirit of empty frivolity and childish trifling, treating all things as if made for foolish jests and giddy laughter; but the spirit of solemnity, clothing all objects with a Divine significance: feeling that the universe, through every branch and leaf,—like the “burning bush” of old—is lighted up with God, and that whatever spot we tread on is “holy ground.” Not the spirit of heartless scepticism, cutting off the soul from all its sustaining and invigorating certitudes, and turning life into a game of chances; but the spirit of hearty faith, reposing calmly on the Absolute, uniting to the greatest realities, and uplifting to the sublimest visions. Not the spirit of worldliness, looking at this fair creation with the eye of avarice, and estimating all things according to their capability of being converted into wealth; nor the spirit of dulness, moving with drowsy look and monotonous tread through narrow ruts cut out by other ages; but the spirit of an all-engrossing devotion to the interests of mind, and the high claims of the ETERNAL ALL—a spirit of earnestness profound and powerful, ever glowing and ever at work. The consciousness of God’s eye would stir the lowest deeps of the soul into excitement, as the revolutions of the moon heave the ocean into restless waves. Where is this true spirit of life? Where in the world? Where in the church? Ah! where? Let me have this spirit, and my worship will be not a thing of mere *locality, time, service, profession, or form*, but a LIFE. Business and pleasure, recreation and labour, will be worship as truly as any singing or prayer. All days will be a Sabbath, all places a temple, all conduct a ritual, all language a psalm. This only is true life.

“We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most—feels the noblest—acts the best.”

Secondly. *The true interests of life.* What are they? Secular possessions? mental attainments? social honours? No; but a *perfect heart*—a heart pure in its deepest fountains and loftiest aspirations; vitally, consciously, and practically centered in the truths, character, and being of God. For man with such a heart, the Eternal will “*show himself strong*”—strong to crush its foes, supply its wants, and fill it with all the blessedness of his own love.

Thirdly. *The true Judge of Life.* Our life has many judges, at many tribunals are we tried, and many, and often diverse, are the verdicts returned. Some are too favourable, and some are too adverse. The few instances of accuracy are random guesses, not righteous deductions. Motive is the spirit and spring of character; and who, in the breast of another, can trace its labyrinthian mazes, disentangle its woofy threads, or sound its hidden depths? Even our own overt actions sometimes misrepresent our motives, and bear false witness against ourselves. “Who art thou, then, that judgest another?” Sooner couldst thou weigh the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, than weigh rightly, in any balance of thine, the moral heart of thy brother. But there is *one* true Judge: it is he whose “eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth.” Ah, me! when that dread crisis of retribution, suggested by analogy, foreshadowed by conscience, and disclosed by inspiration—dawns on my poor spirit, I shall find, that whilst a stranger, not merely to the teeming myriads of other generations and worlds, but to my own compeers and companions, there was ONE whose eyes had followed me everywhere—into the deepest hush of solitude, and the darkest shades of night—resting ever on my inner being, as the all-diffusive air on the lungs of the breathing world.

Germes of Thought.

Analysis of Homily the Fiftieth.

“And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. And God’s anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the Lord stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him. And the ass saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand; and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field; and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way,” &c.—NUMB. xxii. 21—35.

SUBJECT:—*Balaam and his Ass; or, Restraints from Sin.*

THE occasion of the event recorded in this passage is to be found in the state of Balaam’s mind, consequent on the renewed invitation of the king of Moab. In the silence of night he had been allowed to modify the first part of the former unfavourable reply to Balak’s embassy, but on a condition which rendered the permission unavailing for personal ends. He might go with the men, but not to curse. Since he could not do what Balak wished, his proper course was to refuse to accompany the princes. The tempting offers of wealth and honour, however, overpowered his languid spiritual life, and in eager haste he rose early, “and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab,” clearly with the hope and desire of cursing the people of the Lord. Because of this unhallowed disposition in going, “God’s anger was kindled.”

There seems an appropriateness in a worshipper of the true God—as Balaam evidently was, according to the light vouchsafed to primitive men—giving a token of the passing away of this earliest mode of Divine revelation, and of its connexion with another—as it were, the dying blessing of the Patriarchal to the Jewish economy. God intended it should be given, and he would save Balaam from doing it in a wrong spirit. He has already used means to change

his inclination, but without avail, and another instrumentality is to be employed. While on the journey, the ass of the prophet is made sensible to some object of terror near it, and past which it durst not go. It turns out of the path, brushes close against a wall, and at last lies down. It was not tricky nor vicious, and Balaam might have convinced himself that there was something special demanding his inquiries. In other circumstances, possibly, he would have thought such a concurrence of mishaps unlucky, and returned; but so set is he on the reward for cursing Israel, that not only his conscience, but his understanding too, is perverted, and he ill-treats and threatens his docile animal. A few words from the ass help to dispel the illusion which had settled on his mind. Then, when his understanding is cleared, and his heart is softened, his spiritual eye is opened, and he too becomes conscious of a heavenly messenger standing in his way.

The statement of "the dumb ass speaking with man's voice" may be sneered at. The sneer can be repaid; for it is nothing else than a sneer at wise means adapted to a sufficient end; and if *that* is to be sneered at, the paradise of fools is the only place where such sneerers will find things to applaud. God wanted Balaam to know that, whatever money or dignity might be lost, and of whatever displeasure he might be the object, he must bless Israel. Convince him of his want of foresight—that he cannot always judge best for himself; that if he goes forward it is not because he wills it, but because he is allowed; that the faculty and the materials of speech are not in his, but in God's power; and he is then susceptible of the suggestions which will induce him to refuse his own and accept another's utterance. Can you work out a plan for a being, ruled by judging, and not by force, more effective than this speaking of the ass?

We must assign a prominent place to the opposing obstacle—the cause of the unwonted actings of the ass. There is to be especially noticed that it is a spiritual being,

not of earthly origin, and not under material laws. The mode in which the angel of the Lord speaks, in the 32nd and 35th verses, shows that he was the messenger of the covenant, who was with the Church in the wilderness, and whose manifestations point to that personality of the Divine nature who "took not on Him the nature of angels, but took on Him the seed of Abraham." Jesus Christ, in this character, was present to the soul of Balaam, wishing to mould and control it, to restrain from sin and form to obedience. By methods fit to the constitution bestowed on man, he would bend Balaam's will to accordance with his own; and by this channel the subject comes to be applicable to us. It is the history of a struggle. It is not a matter of mere curiosity, of passing and local interest; in it there is the symbol of the ceaseless operation of the Divine upon the human will, which to-day is being engaged upon you as it was upon Balaam. You are not spectators indifferent to the contest whose features are portrayed in this passage. Its processes may illustrate your position, and indicate the end of much that is felt and happens in this day of your lives upon earth. You have indicated the means which are constituted, by God, RESTRAINTS FROM SIN.

The frequent prosperity of the wicked has perplexed and saddened observant minds, and well-nigh induced them to believe that if the Divine government was not favourable to evil, it was indifferent. Why does it not always blast iniquitous projects? Why does it not put insurmountable obstacles in the way of the success of the ungodly? Out of the hidings of its power, could it not save a man like Balaam from acting out his evil wishes? The reason of its not doing so is, that such a course of proceeding would be pursued at the sacrifice of the higher principles of government involved in the human constitution. Men are gifted with the power to choose between good and evil. The obstacles placed in the path of the wrong-doer must be obstacles suited to moral beings. Were his eyes only to be opened, he would see how strong and how many such exist.

He might not at once feel himself helpless and brought to a stand by them, but he would perceive that they were warning him not to proceed. Various *forms* and *characteristics* assumed by these restraints are exhibited here. Let us notice—

I. THE FORMS OF RESTRAINT FROM SIN :—

1. *They appear in external appliances.* The things that come upon men from without are not always just as the most prosperous wish them to be : a power, beyond their shaping, prescribes the characters and the seasons of what affects them outwardly. The revealed word of God stands in the way of every member of our community as a hindrance to what is wrong, as a guide to good-will to man, and obedience to the Lord, if it be only fairly consulted. When the heart is bent on some course, and you are delayed in fulfilling it ; when a foot is crushed, or disease lays you aside ; or when you build up your bliss upon friends or schemes, and the hopes you cherished are “as springs of water that fail ;” open your eyes, and consider if this be not a messenger from God frowning on you, because of your departings from him. Pass over no outward check or annoyance without questioning as to whether it may not have been laid in the way to turn you from some unhallowed purpose. It may be a restraint from sin.

2. *In addresses to the understanding.* You have the faculty of comparing the past with the present, and forming a conclusion as to whether the latter is suitable to what occurred during the former. God’s book and other agencies address themselves to you. The remembrance of some words of God, or the words of some man, overheard or directly spoken to you, may be the means of placing in light some dark feature of thought, or some evil action. They may rouse you to ask what ground there is, in your past or present relation to God, for adhering to those thoughts or doings ; they may unfold some unnoticed or lightly-treated claim, and appeal to your judgment whether those are the fulfilments of this ; they may make more vivid the world

whose positions and movements are the flowers and fruits of those that happen in this, and make you pause to learn whether you are thinking and acting as you would like to remember, and feel the developments of, throughout eternity. In these surmisings and questionings, casting a shadow upon your purpose, and coming over you in lonely hours or the hurry of business—are there not addresses of God, aiming, through your understanding, to withhold you from sin?

3. *In stirrings of conscience.* When wishful to begin some kinds of action, who has not become conscious of the presence of an uncalled-for and unwelcome interdict? Conscience would stay proceeding; or it may let you enter on your self-seeking path, apparently without a drawback; but it hath spoken to you as it did to Balaam, after you have gone on a part of your hurtful way. Its stirrings are graduated from that of an almost insuperable prohibition to the scarcely perceptible whisper of doubt. In one or other of those forms “the still small voice” has made you stop to listen, and given intimation that each inward strife, and every self-reproach, is a God-stirred conscience restraining you from sin.

4. *In excitements of the emotions.* The perception of wrong as wrong, or of danger, suffices to quicken the soul to unusual sensitiveness. In darkness or loneliness the ear is opened, and the messenger of the Lord is heard threatening the mean and unkind and covetous man with returns similar to those he has shown. His heart may sorrow, and he may wish he could undo the action; or his released judgment may lead him to the unseen Lord whose laws he has broken, and alarm seize him, lest holiness and power should unite to give him the reward of his unrighteousness. Each pang of remorse, and each thrill of fear, have uttered, in different forms, “Keep back from sin.”

II. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF RESTRAINTS FROM SIN:—

1. *They are frequent.* If means of affecting men’s judgments, consciences, and emotions, in regard to God’s views

and wishes respecting sin, are involved and operative in such various things, there must be very many indications of the evil of sin, and the need of shunning it. Hardly a day can pass in which one restraint or other will not be felt, or at least be in captivity. Some men may reach a state in which they are callous to most kinds of checks, as Balaam seems to have been to the night message of God, and the waywardness of the ass; but it is the callousness which is proved by such a state, not that there are not innumerable restraints.

2. *They are progressive.* On the principle that every human being is under a process of moral training, there is implied this progression in restraining from sin. If one method does not answer another will be tried, until the whole circle fitted for him is completed. I believe that, up to that season, which is reserved in the Father's mind, each succeeding trial has an element additional in power to that which has gone before. If being turned aside will not induce a retreat, there will be crushing of the foot. Could we distinguish perfectly character and circumstances, we should perceive the accumulation of influences likely to affect the will of each man. If a mistake will not rectify him, there may be a loss: if a loss will not, there may be personal affliction. I do not mean that this order in restraints from sin is followed with all—for, as widely as men differ, so widely will the order of what influences them differ; but I use it in illustration of that light in which this passage teaches us to regard God's dealings against sin, that they become successively more potent, until the will either yields, or sinks into torpidity or powerlessness.

3. *They are near, though oft unnoticed.* The course of remarks will have shown that if the ungodly continue, and even prosper, in ungodliness, there is abundance of restraints placed in their way by God, to withhold and turn them from evil. If they do not notice these various obstacles, still they are near to them. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and heart." External events bear on you unpleasantly. One or other of the faculties of the soul is

affected; but how frequently do you pass on without paying heed to the voices uttered? When the evil has been accomplished, and the spirit is awakened to recal it as sinful, we can distinguish restraints which were in the path, and may wonder at the overlooking of them. Yes; there the angel is! Our selfish journeys, our mistakes, our ill-judged determinations, our angry words, our neglects of human duty, are going right in opposition to him. We may not perceive that he is so close, we may love the darkness of evil, we may be degraded below the beast we regard as pre-eminently stupid—for reason, conscience, and emotions do not bend our wills to God's—but the time may be at hand when the sword, flashing over us, shall burst upon our sight, and when there will be no space for return—only for the crushing of hopeless regrets!

D. G. WATT, M.A.

Analysis of Homily the Fifty-first.

“And brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan” [a piece of brass].—2 KINGS xviii. 4.

SUBJECT:—*Nehushtan; or, the Perverting Tendency of Sin, and the True Instincts of a Reformer.*

WITHOUT any preparatory remarks, we shall proceed at once to the subject we have announced, and which is suggested by the incident before us.

I. THE PERVERTING TENDENCY OF SIN. In the twenty-first chapter of the book of Numbers, you have an account of the origin and use of the “brasen serpent:” *it was a special provision of goodness for a special evil.* In this respect it resembled the mediation of Christ. I see God's general goodness everywhere: it is in the living sunbeam of day, and in the silvery rays of night; it rolls in the ocean; it breathes in every changing wind; it sparkles in the minerals of the

mountains, and blooms in the productions of the soil ; it streams through all seasons ; it pervades all space. It is the fascination of all beauty, and the music of all sound—the charm of all sentiments, and the pulse of all life. It is the under current of all history ; it is the deep well-spring of the universe. All I see and hear and feel proclaim to me that “ God is good, and that his mercies are over all the works of his hand.” But in the mediation of Jesus, as in the brasen serpent of old, there is a display of *special* goodness. “ Herein,” says the apostle, “ is love : not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” “ Herein ” the streams meet in majestic confluence ; herein the rays meet in all the intenseness of focal luminousness and fire.

Now, we find the Jews, in the case before us, perverting the special display of goodness ; but how ? In preserving the “ brasen serpent ”—its material symbol—for upwards of seven hundred years, after it had answered its end in the wilderness ? No. We respect that feeling which impelled this people to preserve it for so many centuries, and to hand it down as a precious thing from sire to son through so many generations. As a relic of a marvellous history, a memorial of heavenly mercy, it was fitted for usefulness : it might have been blessed to many. Many a pious Israelite might have had his faith strengthened, and his piety quickened, as he looked upon that serpent-figure, wrought by that hand which of old divided the sea, and smote the flinty rock. Yes ; and many, too, under trial it might have encouraged to look to that God for help who had so mercifully interposed on behalf of his serpent-bitten forefathers. But the perversion was in taking it out of its proper position—in raising a hoary relic of history into a god for worship. “ For unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it.” To them it was no longer a memorial to remind them of God’s great mercy, it was itself deity. In its place, as a memorial, it might be a blessing ; out of its place, as a god, it was a curse.

Sin has ever been a perverting power. It wrests things from their true relations, prostitutes them to improper purposes, and thus converts blessings into curses. We see its perverting action in *the secular department of life*. WEALTH in its place is a blessing: it multiplies a thousand-fold our sources of pleasure, and facilitates improvement; it enhances our social influence, and wonderfully increases our ability for well doing. But when this wealth comes to be regarded as a material end rather than a spiritual means; when it engrosses the chief of our powers and time, kindles the master-inspiration, and becomes the predominant theme of thought and end of life; then it is transmuted into a curse, and the brasen serpent has become a god. We see, moreover, its perverting action in the *spiritual department of life*. TEMPLES in their places are blessings; they afford temporal conveniences for spiritual ends. There, sheltered from the storm, or screened from the sun, amid the darkness of night or the light of day, the rich and the poor can meet together on common ground, to blend their souls and sympathies in imploring prayers and thanksgiving songs. But when these places are regarded as invested with special sanctity; as so constructed that the infinite Father is more accessible, or present, within their narrow precincts than in the open world, the homestead, or the market; they become evils. They are nought but nurseries for bigotry, superstition, and mysticism, and the brasen serpent has become a god. MINISTERS in their places are blessings. Though the world has never acknowledged the benefits which the true Gospel ministry has conferred upon it, and though the church is far from being adequately impressed with its value, I feel that I have sufficient evidence to maintain the position, that it has done more to check the advance of crime than all your courts of justice, more to maintain the world's peace than all your armies, more to uplift humanity than all your secular science and mechanical skill. It is to society what tides are to the ocean: it stirs its deepest depths, and helps to keep it pure. But when ministers are

looked upon with a superstitious eye—when the imagination robes them with such peculiar sanctity that their teachings are regarded as infallible, and their interests in heaven as special, so that men crouch at their feet, and sue for their prayers—they are no longer blessings: they are evils, and the brasen serpent has become a god. THEOLOGY is a blessing in its place. To have the truths of revelation reduced to something like a system of thought, by fair criticism and honest induction, is a work which I am not disposed to underrate. It serves to guide and stimulate thought. But when theology—which, at most, is nothing more than a class of fallible human notions—is regarded as *the* gospel truths; when these notions are fought for as *absolute* truths; when they become the watchword of contending parties; when Christian charity and good feeling are sacrificed to maintain them; then theology becomes an evil. The letter is raised above the spirit—the human form above the divine substance: the brasen serpent has become a god. SACRAMENTS in their places are blessings. Baptism and the “Lord’s Supper,” when regarded merely as material symbols of spiritual truths, are unquestionably valuable, both transmitting to the inner heart, through the medium of the senses, truths, the belief of which is indispensable to soul elevation; the former declaring the truth, that humanity is so corrupt in its first stage as to require the application of an extraneous influence to make it pure; and the latter, that humanity, though it deserves death, can obtain life through the death of another. Viewed in such aspects, they have been helps to piety in every age. But when they are regarded as mystic vehicles, through which, in the hands of a crafty or superstitious priesthood, grace flows into the souls of men, or made the arena of sectarian and acrimonious controversies, then they are evils: the brasen serpent becomes a god. The SABBATH in its place is a blessing: as a periodical portion of human existence wrested for us by a merciful Providence from a selfish secularism, and devoted especially to benevolent and spi-

ritual ends, we cannot prize its holy hours too much. It affords relief from the pressure and monotony of worldly business and physical toil; it is a solemn pause in the world's tumultuous career; it is evermore to the good a soul-quickenng parenthesis in the chapter of life. It is fraught with historic associations the most suggestive and hallowing; it takes us back to Him who, on "the first day of the week," despoiled mortality of its victory, and obtained the keys of death and *Hades*; it is a rest which remaineth for the people of God. But when it is regarded as having more claims on man to be holy than any other day; when it is superstitiously bowed to as the sovereign, rather than intelligently used as the servant; when its observance is sought to be imposed upon those who do not believe in it, and who have no faith to enter into its rest; when the ritual is exalted above the moral, the priest above the man, the little temple above the great world; then it becomes an evil—and the brazen serpent has become a god.

II. THE TRUE INSTINCTS OF A REFORMER. Here Hezekiah acts the reformer with model propriety. "He brake in pieces the brazen serpent." Perhaps most, if not all, the evils of society may be considered as the perversion of good things. Oppression is the perversion of power, superstition the perversion of religion, priestcraft the perversion of the ministry; and all the errors that curse the world are but the perversion of truths—truths wrested from their proper connexions, and exhibited in improper and distorted aspects. Hence it is that the great mission of every Christian, every true man, is that of a reformer. He has to put an end to abuses, and to bring perverted things into their true relation and use. The old prophets were reformers, John the Baptist was a reformer, Jesus and his apostles were all reformers. To reform the moral world is the mission of every disciple of Christ.

Now, Hezekiah displays a few instincts, or attributes, which seem to me indispensable to the character of a true reformer.

First. *He displays insight.* He saw what the people did not see. Where his age saw a god he saw nothing more than a piece of brass—Nehushtan. He looked for himself, took not the opinions of others; and what appeared as a divinity to his contemporaries was but a piece of brass to him. If we would be reformers we must have this *insight*—this faculty to look at things as they are, and not as popular feeling and prejudice would have them to be. We must disrobe them of their imaginary importance, brush off the varnish, take off the mask, penetrate through the outside, the “vain show of things,” and look into the very heart of popular institutions, conventional moralities, current creeds, and church pretensions. We must have eyes to see that the world is under the dominion of *phantasies*, and that its very gods are but pieces of brass.

Secondly. *He displays honesty.* He not only saw it was brass, but he *said* it. Whilst a large number of professors—yes, and, alas! of ministers too—see things just as the world sees them—look at the same outside, and practically worship the same gods—but few of those who see things rightly are honest enough to say so; honest enough to call, as Hezekiah did, the god of the people “brass:” and yet this must be done, if we would reform, in any measure, the abuses of society. Heaven enables us to learn things as they are, and to call them by their right names! Systems, customs, societies, sermons, books, and artistic productions, however admired and popular, if not true, let us be honest enough to call them *brass*.

Thirdly. *He displays practical courage.* There are some men who have sufficient penetrating insight to discover the falseness of current things, and sufficient honesty to declare popular divinities “brass;” but who, nevertheless, lack the necessary practical courage to do what Hezekiah now did—break “in pieces the brasen serpent.” I have no hope of any man doing any real spiritual good who has not these three instincts. It is not the man who has no eye to see only the seeming; nor the man who, discovering the *real*,

is not honest enough to speak out his views; nor even the man who both clearly sees and honestly declares the *real*, but who declines to use the manly hand to break "in pieces" the false, that will do the divine work of *reform*. The man that has the three combined is the reformer. Almighty love multiply amongst us men of this threefold instinct—men which the age, the world, demands!

Analysis of Homily the Fifty-second.

"And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne." &c.—REV. v. 6—10.

THE general subject of these and the foregoing verses of this chapter is the GOVERNMENT OF GOD. In a preceding number* we noticed the three general truths which the first five verses suggest, in relation to this grand theme. They were—first, *that it is conducted according to a vast preconcerted plan*; secondly, *that this vast plan is sealed in mystery*; and, thirdly, *that the mystery of this plan is to be expounded by Christ*. The passage we have now read leads us on another consecutive step, which, for the sake of connexion, we may numerate—fourthly, *that Christ, as the Expounder of the mystery of this plan, is an object of immense interest to the universe*. He is in the midst of the throne. Various orders of intelligence surround him as he takes "the book:" they prostrate themselves at his "footstool," with "harps," and "vials," and "song." The present branch of the subject, therefore, is—

Christ the Expounder of the Mystery.

I. THAT CHRIST, AS THE EXPOUNDER OF THE MYSTERY OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT, OCCUPIES A CENTRAL POSITION, AND ASSUMES THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY ASPECTS.

* See *Homilist* for January, p. 39.

First. Look at the *position he occupies*. He is in the “midst of the throne;” he is in the very centre of the intelligent creation. He *attracts all—he enlightens all—he governs all—he blesses all* with *new life and beauty*. Secondly. *Look at the aspect he assumes*. In his person are combined the marks of suffering humanity and the attributes of perfect Divinity. “Stood a Lamb as it had been slain”—the marks of Calvary on his person; “having seven horns”—*perfect power*; “and seven eyes”—*perfect knowledge*. Blessed thought! Our nature is associated with Divinity on the throne of the universe; its human scars preach, in mute, but thrilling force, *love* and *justice* in the ear of all spirits, and its Godhead glories command the reverence and praise of all.

II. THAT CHRIST, AS THE EXPOUNDER OF THE MYSTERY OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT, AWAKENS, IN ALL CLASSES OF HOLY MIND, INEFFABLE DELIGHT. “And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.” These numbers probably designate indefinite multitudes of representative classes. Their attributes and aspects are further developed in other places of this book. The language here employed may denote the characteristics of their delight. Here is *humility*: they “fell down before the Lamb.” The profoundest reverence mingled with their joy. Here is *harmony*: here are “harps”—emblems of music. I do not know that we are authorised to assume, from such symbolical language, that there is vocal or instrumental music in heaven. It is not the sound, but the spirit, of music that is there. Here is *acceptableness*: “golden vials full of odours.” Its breathing ecstasies ascend as fragrant incense to God. Here is *prayerfulness*: “the prayers of saints.” Death terminates the saint’s need of prayer for *certain* objects, such as forgiveness, deliverance from error, and victory over foes, but not the *spirit* of prayer—the spirit of felt dependence upon God. This humble, harmonious, accept-

able, and prayerful delight, Christ awakens in the universe as the Expounder of God's great plan.

III. THAT CHRIST, AS THE EXPOUNDER OF THE MYSTERY OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT, IS DEEMED WORTHY OF THE OFFICE, BECAUSE OF HIS REDEPTIVE ACHIEVEMENT. "Thou art *worthy* to take the book, and to open the seals thereof." Why? "For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God," &c. Observe, first, *he has redeemed*. The redemption of man consists in a deliverance from the *power* and *penalty* of sin. Theology has often confounded redemption with the *atonement*. (1) The atonement was universal, redemption is limited. Christ died for all, but, as a fact, only some are redeemed. (2) The atonement is the means, redemption is the end. Without the atonement there could have been no redemption, but without redemption there is still the atonement. (3) The atonement was the act of one Being, redemption involves the agencies of many. In offering the atonement, Christ trode the winepress alone; in effecting redemption, the subject works, teachers work, angels work, the SPIRIT works. (4) The atonement came without man's seeking; the world never asked for it; but redemption never comes without the earnest seeking of the individual. (5) The atonement was an event that took place "once for all," in one spot, at one period—on Calvary, eighteen hundred years ago; redemption is constantly occurring in all parts of the earth, and in all periods of time. Secondly. *He has redeemed by sacrifice*. What was the sacrifice? A few self-denying efforts?—a world? No; his life. "By thy *blood*;" by the sacrifice of thy life thyself. Thirdly. *He has redeemed, by sacrifice, all classes*. "Out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." The atonement is designed to redeem the world, and some of all its multitudinous sections have been thus redeemed, and millions more are to follow yet. Fourthly. *He has redeemed all classes, by sacrifice to the highest honours*. "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

They are priests, in relation to their Maker, offering up the sacrifice of a devout and grateful soul; they are kings, in relation to their race, wielding a governing influence over their thoughts and hearts. A *true* Christian is a moral sovereign.

What a work is this redemptive work! Well may the universe deem Jesus *worthy* to open the book, because of what he has done to save the world.

Analysis of Homily the Fifty third.

“What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.”—EZEK. xviii. 2, 3.

SUBJECT:—*The Entail of Suffering.*

THE present world is to the majority a scene of affliction. “Man is born to trouble.” To some it is a scene of complicated, protracted, and aggravated suffering. Our ability to bear the ills of life depends not so much on their intrinsic severity as on the circumstances of their origin. Self-inflicted ills are the most grievous to be borne. Here remorse combines with anguish, murmuring is forbidden, and the spirit cannot relieve itself in complaint. With less difficulty do we bear even greater evils when they have not originated with ourselves. A consciousness of comparative innocence sustains us, or we may even come to regard ourselves as martyrs to the injustice of men, or the arrangements of the supreme Ruler. This was the case of the Jews: they were in captivity, whither they had been carried for the sins of their ancestors. This reference of their sufferings was so frequent that it embodied itself in a proverb. “The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.”

There was little that was peculiar in the case of the Jews, or in the reference of their sufferings, which they were in the habit of making. Men still suffer in a similar way,

and not unfrequently attempt to relieve themselves by a similar reference. We may, therefore, remark—

I. THAT THE FACT IS INDISPUTABLE. Men are liable to an entail of suffering. The Divine law asserts it:—"I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation," &c. (Exodus xx. 5). Compare with this the awful malediction of Christ:—"That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth" (Matt. xxiii. 35). The teachings of sacred Scripture harmonize entirely with those of experience on this point. No man can doubt this. Not so surely will a father's inheritance descend to his sons as his physical characteristics. These are reproduced from generation to generation in long succession. Hence hereditary diseases. How many of these were originally the result of violations of the Divine Laws, natural or moral, needs not to be shown. Thus it is that the sins of one generation are so often seen to descend, in sufferings, upon another. The vice of an ancestor may entail evils on his descendants which the piety of generations may not wholly eradicate, and which the impiety of succeeding generations may only enhance and perpetuate to an indefinite extent. Thus the drunkard poisons the health of even his temperate son, just as the profuse reduces the social status, perhaps irremediably, of his frugal and industrious children.

And so mysterious are the relations which bind together succeeding generations, that, in many cases, both the mental and moral characteristics are seen to be transmitted. The evil tempers we have indulged re-appear in our offspring to torture them: and when they are evil, it may be said, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes," &c. So far the proverb was characterised by truth, but the manner in which it was employed intimates that the procedure was deemed unjust. We observe, therefore—

II. THE PROCEDURE MAY BE VINDICATED. The entail complained of is the result of the Divine government; and,

as in all other instances, so in the present, that government may be shown to be both just and beneficial.

We may confidently assert that this procedure cannot be shown to be unjust. Man is a sinner. "We are a *seed* of evil-doers; children that are corruptors." We are therefore liable to punishment. Punishment is inflicted, indeed, in but a mitigated form, for we are yet in a state of probation, but there are to be seen, in the evils which overtake us, abundant proofs of the Divine displeasure against sin.

The only question, therefore, which, as sinners, we have a right to entertain, respects the degree of our punishment. Does our punishment, in the entailed evils of which we have spoken, surpass our guilt? If not, we have no right to complain. *In what manner* the punishment shall be inflicted it belongs not to us to dictate: this is a question for the Judge alone to decide. If it shall seem right to Him to institute an economy such as the text specifies, and that economy does not bear on us with greater severity than our sins have deserved, nor so great, it is liable to no objection whatever on the score of injustice. The fathers have eaten, and we have eaten, the sour grape; hence the painful result. But this procedure may be vindicated, moreover, by a reference to its adaptation to the great end of God's moral government of mankind. That end may be simply stated to be the repression of moral evil. To secure this end, he appeals to us in every possible form, and by every conceivable motive. By an arrangement which entails, in part, the bitter fruits of our own sins upon our offspring, he appeals to our tenderest sentiments. Who are dearer to us than our children? What motive more influential upon us than their good? What more likely to deter a man from vicious indulgence than the thought that it may taint the blood, paralyze the limbs, and cloud the skies, of those who ought to inherit the reward and perpetuate the blessing of his own virtues? And what more humiliating to a parent than to see the very faults which have disgraced and plagued himself reproduced in the children of his fondest

love? Hence we may learn the tendency of this law of the Divine government, and see that it admits of the most complete vindication. We may expect, therefore—

III. THAT THE USE OF THE PROVERB SHALL CEASE; not that Jehovah shall ever repeal this law, but that the consistency of it with moral perfection being perceived, men shall cease to urge that which shall afford them neither excuse nor ground of complaint.

1. An acquaintance with the rules which guide the Divine judgment of transgressors shall prevent men from using this proverb. Let the whole chapter be carefully studied by any who may have hitherto doubted the equity of the Divine procedure. No man dies, no man suffers, but for his own iniquity, by what channel soever the penal visitation may overtake him.

2. The common relation which all men sustain to Him may well prevent us from attributing iniquity to Him. "Behold all souls are mine," &c. The Bible teaches us how intimate and loving is that tie that binds us all, and *all alike*, unto God. None shall suffer without just cause. No weak partialities characterise Jehovah in his relation to the children of men. The Bible enables us to understand this truth; and when it is understood, all complaints will be for ever hushed. When will men "know and believe the love God has to them?"

3. The true spirit of penitence which a knowledge of his equity and his love excites shall, in a similar manner, acquit Him. A deep sense of sin, and true contrition on account of it, will not suffer man to cavil against God: then they meekly "accept the punishment of their iniquity." *They have sinned.* This thought abases them in the dust before his feet. *He has not destroyed them.* His long suffering and grace elevate Him in their esteem, far above the region of contradiction or complaint, to the highest pinnacle of glory. Whatever they understand they admire, and whatever they do not understand they are willing to believe admits of an interpretation honourable to Himself.

4. If any darkness yet seem to hover around these truths, the dawn of the last day shall assuredly dispel it ; and friends and foes shall then unite—the former joyfully, the latter inevitably—in the confession, that “ *The ways of the Lord are equal.*”

Let us not, however, be occupied solely by the argument, nor satisfied with the conclusion to which it has brought us. How dreadful oftentimes is truth ! “ Every man shall die for his own iniquity. He that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.” Personal experience of the deep and thrilling import of these terms awaits all of us who are estranged from God. Sinful pleasures are at best but sour grapes. How poor the pleasures, how sad the destiny of the sinner !

Analysis of Homily the Fifty-fourth.

“ Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts,” &c.—ACTS ii. 37.

SUBJECT :—*Mental Stages to Conversion.*

THERE are three stages through which the mind of these people passed, and through which all must pass, in order to reach conversion :—First. *They heard Gospel truths.* What did they hear ? (1) That the last days foretold by Joel had commenced (ver. 16—21). These days will be distinguished by three things—the outpouring of the Spirit, new mental phenomena, and the commencement of a series of events that would go on until the “ notable day.” (2) *That the events of these last days take place under the direction of Christ* (ver. 33). (3) *That this Christ, who has now the universe under his control, they had crucified.* “ Now when they heard this,” &c. Second. *They felt compunctive emotions.* “ They were pricked—pierced through—in their heart.” The sense of injustice, ingratitude, and impiety, pierced them. Third. *They started a new question :—“ What shall we do ?”* Three things are here implied :—(1) *A sense of peril ;* (2) *a belief that something was necessary to be done ;* (3) *a readiness to do whatever was necessary.* Every man, to be converted, must pass

through these stages. He must hear Gospel truths, these must produce compunctive emotions, and these emotions must produce this question.

Analysis of Homily the Fifty-fifth.

“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.”—JOHN i. 10—12.

SUBJECT:—*The Relation of Humanity to Christ.*

THESE words give us three distinct classes of men in relation to Christ:—

I. THOSE WHO DO NOT KNOW CHRIST. This is stated as an extraordinary fact. Though “in the world, the world knew him not.” In the world: (1) *in the operations of nature*, shining in its light, breathing in its life, and speaking in its voice; (2) *in the intuitions of reason*, in the notions of causation, the sentiments of order, the propensities to worship, and the forebodings of conscience; (3) *in the events of history*, in the creations of literature, in the progress of science, in the growth of commerce, and in the advancing steps of civilization; (4) *in the special revelations of heaven*—appearing as the Promised to Adam, as the Shiloh to Jacob, as the Counsellor to Isaiah, the Desire of Nations to Hosea, and the Sun of Righteousness to Malachi. And yet the world knew him not. *This class comprehends Pagans.*

II. THOSE WHO KNOW CHRIST, BUT DO NOT RECEIVE HIM. “He came to his own,” &c. This class comprehends all who are *mere hearers* of the Gospel. To know Christ, and to reject him, is to sin *against the benevolent designs of God*, the *moral sentiments of our being*—such as *justice, gratitude, and reverence*—and *against the highest interests of human nature*.

III. THOSE WHO RECEIVE CHRIST, AND ARE AFFILIATED TO GOD BY HIM. “To them gave he power to become the sons of God.” He unites estranged humanity to God by in-breathing his own filial disposition. What a privilege is this!

The Genius of the Gospel.

(Continued from page 132.)

[Able expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are happily not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remark, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.]

SEVENTH SECTION.—Matt. iv. 12—25.*

The Dawn of the Model Ministry.

JOHN “was cast into prison.”† “The voice” which rose in the wilderness rang its piercing tones through the heart of Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, is now hushed in the oppressive silence of a cell; the ministry that was “a burning and shining light” has gone down amidst the dense gloom of a prison. But the world, though it incarcerates virtue, seeks to quench the light of its great teacher, shall not be left in darkness. John’s light has set, but with its last fading beams there mingles the dawn of another and higher ministry. As the stars of all preliminary dispensations go down with John’s imprisonment, the “GREAT LIGHT” from which they all derived their lustre arises “upon the people that sat in darkness.”

This passage does not follow the preceding in immediate chronological relation, for Christ evidently taught and wrought considerably both between his temptation in the wilderness, and the imprisonment of John,‡ and the events here recorded; nor is there an immediate chronological relation even between the events which these verses bring

* Mark i 14—20; Luke iv. 14, &c.

† For a detailed account of John’s incarceration, see Matt. xiv. 3—12; Mark vi. 17—22; Luke iii. 19, 20.

‡ John iii. 24.

together. But, notwithstanding this, they develop truths, in relation to the ministry of the Son of God—the *model ministry*—which are of universal application, and of vital importance, to all ages.

They teach us three grand truths about Christ's ministry, the practical development of which by the church is indispensable to the diffusion of Christianity, and the spiritual progress of the world.

I. THAT ITS ASPECT WAS BOTH SPIRITUAL AND SECULAR. In its *spiritual* aspect, the narrative suggests that it was *enlightening*. It tells us that Jesus, according to an old prophecy, "came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: that is might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,* "The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." Christ was a *luminous* teacher: the truths he enunciated were all-revealing. They opened up a new world to the eye of the soul; they exposed time in the light of eternity, humanity in the light of God. And the way he presented them was most lucid. It was not in abstruse reasonings, nor incoherent declamation. He did not cloud his audiences with wordy redundancies; he did not perplex them with the dry formalities of logic, or the erudite references of criticism. His words were radiant. His hearers require neither the specular of syntax nor science to see what he meant, for he spoke not so much to the critical, reasoning, or any other faculty, as to the *soul*. All the subjects he touched stood out in broad daylight to the common eye. Hence "the people who sat in darkness"

* The Evangelist sees nothing accidental in the choice of this very locality, but, on the contrary, he sees in it the fulfilment of a prophecy of Isaiah (ix. 1, 2). The passage quoted means, that the light of the Messiah would reveal itself, in the most brilliant manner, in the most despised localities of Palestine.—*Olshausen*.

when he appeared amongst them, saw a "great light" throwing its beams on those spiritual domains of existence which sin, for ages, had enwrapped in gloom. (2) The narrative suggests further, in relation to the spiritual aspect of Christ's ministry, that it was *reformatory*. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The reformation he sought was not a mere revolution in intellectual ideas, or in external habits. It would require the former as a means, and ensure the latter as a result. It was a thorough change in the *presiding* disposition of the soul he meant. It is fully expressed in the two words, "Follow me," which he now addressed to those fishermen on the shores of Galilee, who forthwith became his disciples. True reformation of soul consists in *following* him who is the Divine embodiment, and minister of that disinterested benevolence which is the one sovereign law of all holy mind, and the one necessary condition of all moral order and true joy.

But his ministry had a *secular* as well as spiritual aspect. He was not merely engaged in preaching to souls, but in "healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them." What a catalogue of physical woes is this! and yet it is but a specimen of the bodily sufferings which he thus removed at the outset of his public life. Jesus did not overlook the claims and the woes of the body in his endeavours to enlighten and reform the soul. He fed those who were hungry, and healed those who were sick; and thus he "took our infirmities, and bore our sickness."

That the ministry of Christ had this twofold aspect is not only an unquestionable, but a significant, fact. It indicates the method in which his system should ever have been presented to mankind; that it should have been made to appear

the friend of humanity in all its varied sufferings—the Divine instrumentality to remove all evils, natural and moral, from the world. But how lamentably has the church failed in this matter! It has almost *entirely* neglected the secular aspect. Attempts to remove political wrongs, and promote measures for the physical well-being of society, have generally been considered as beneath her high calling, and a work too worldly for her holy hands. Had the church exhibited Christianity in the spirit of its Lord—made it appear to men more as a secular benefactor, and less as a theological bel-ligerent, an ascetic devotee, or a sectarian partizan; had the world seen it move in the acts of a genial messenger of deep and genuine philanthropy, penetrating the darkest scenes of trial, with a word to cheer and a hand to bless; showing that “pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction;”—and less in pompous ceremonies, conflicting creeds, and affected pietisms; I say, had this been the past history of the church, the secularly depressed—the great bulk of the race—would have had their sympathies in warm and living connexion with it, instead of, as now, having their hearts loofed away in antipathy, and setting up a system of “secularism” to oppose and crush it. Moreover, the church has not only so generally neglected the presentation of the secular aspect of Christianity; it has often failed in the spiritual. Has it presented Christianity as Christ did—to *enlighten* and *reform*; or to bewilder with party controversies, and to win over to little sects? Has the reformation it has sought been an endeavour to turn men to the one true and living God, or to turn them to its own peculiar dogmas and politics? Let history answer.

II. THAT ITS SYMPATHIES ARE THOROUGH AND PRACTICAL. The verses suggest three thoughts illustrative of the thoroughness of Christ's sympathies:—First. *They had respect to man in the lowest condition.* The tract of country here described as the scene on which Christ now entered, where he hence-

forth takes up his residence, and makes the special field of his ministry and miracles, was populated by the obscurest classes of the "Holy Land." The dwellers of those northern frontiers of the country were, for the most part, characteristically poor, ignorant, and despised. Living at such a remote distance from Jerusalem, the centre of religious light, and so proximate to the Pagan world, they were truly "a people which sat in darkness." Yet these obscure and benighted men seem to engage the special sympathies of the Son of God. As a Divine teacher, he could have selected the most aristocratic and enlightened portion of Palestine as the scene of his residence, and the sphere of his labour, but "he descended into the lowest parts of the earth." Does not this show the thoroughness of his interest in man? Does it not show that humanity, stripped of every vestige of adventitious worth, the creature of indigence and the child of woe, is an object of deep interest to Him? But these verses suggest another thought illustrative of the thoroughness of Christ's sympathies, and that is, secondly, *that they had respect to man in the entirety of his nature.* He did not, as we have already seen, overlook either part of man's nature, body and soul. He was neither of that class of semi-philanthropists who ignore the soul, and look at man as a mere bundle of corporeal interests; nor of that who weep sentimental tears over the unfelt woes of the soul, but are cold and callous in relation to the physical sufferings of mankind. His sympathies encompassed the whole man in all the elements of his being, the variety of his circumstances, and the vastness and complexity of his relations. The verses suggest yet another thought illustrative of the thoroughness of Christ's sympathies, and that is, thirdly, *that they had respect to man in the influence of his social relation.* "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." An apt figure, taken from the daily calling of the men whom he addressed, intended to express the truth, that if they followed him, he would employ them to collect men into his blessed empire of truth and love. *Christ seeks to make men useful in their influence.* The

social influence of a man is the most serious item in his existence. No one can measure the influence of a solitary individual: it is a stream which, although insignificant at first, gets new volume every hour, works a channel through the soul of ages, imparts vitality, or diffuses death, as it wends its ever-swelling course; and this operates on posterity, either for good or ill, long after the name of its originator has sunk in oblivion. If the influence is not good, posterity is injured;—yes, and the very party, too, who has exerted it will be made to suffer, both by a necessary reaction and a righteous retribution. Now, the thoroughness of Christ's sympathy for man is seen in the regard which he manifested for this *mighty power*. He sought to convert it into a power to bless posterity. "I will make you fishers of men." Christ blesses men that they may bless their race. His heart was not confined to the men he saw, or to his contemporaries: distant empires and unborn generations engaged his love.

But all this thorough sympathy here displayed was *practical*. It was not a thing that expended itself in words, or tears, or prayers; it took the form of earnest, persevering, all-consecrating labour. "And Jesus went about all Galilee," &c.

It were superfluous to ask whether the followers of Jesus have copied this feature of this model ministry. Where, in what post-apostolic age, and in what section of the church, do you find sympathies like these—sympathies so genuine and deep, so all-embracing and practical? These sympathies are the warm life-blood of the church; and because they scarcely circulate in her veins, her appearance has the repulsive ghastliness of disease rather than the fascinating bloom of health. She is too languid: her voice is too feeble to pierce the ear of the age, and her hand too palsied for her work. We infer again, from this passage, in relation to the ministry of Christ, that—

III. ITS USEFULNESS WAS BOTH DIRECT AND INDIRECT. There are two kinds of influence which moral beings are capable of exerting—that which arises from an intentional effort,

and that which arises incidentally as the social consequence of our conduct. If I reason with a man for any purpose, the influence I produce upon his mind is by intention; but if others, through the report of my reasoning, are influenced by it, the influence is incidental; it never entered into my purpose. Every man, perhaps, exerts more of the incidental than the intentional. Our direct efforts to influence men are only occasional. Incidentally, however, the whole of our life, which comes within the cognizance of others, produces an influence. The usefulness which springs from the two sources is the highest; and this was the usefulness of Christ's ministry. *Here is the direct or intentional.* To Peter and his brother Andrew, James and his brother John, Christ now makes a *personal* appeal, and the effect produced was what he designed. His merciful behest went at once to their hearts, and forthwith they left their craft and their nets, and followed him. It is true that we have not the power over moral mind which Christ possessed, and therefore cannot calculate with certainty upon results, but we ought undoubtedly to imitate him in the direct personalness of his appeals. We should ponder the fact, that our great example dealt with men *individually* as well as collectively, in the unit as well as in the mass. But here, too, we have the *indirect* or incidental usefulness of Christ. "His fame went throughout all Syria." "And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan." The *indirect* influence which thus drew within the glance of Christ's eye, and the reach of his voice, these vast throngs from the different parts of the country, must have been highly useful. Many of them, undoubtedly, would go back to their homes not only with new and stirring ideas, but with noble impulses and higher aims.

Here, again, the disparity between the ministry of Christ and that of the church painfully recurs to memory. How little, in the ministry of the church, has been the *personal* dealing with men—the bringing of soul into individual

contact with soul. Has not Christianity been spoken more in the official than in the individual voice—more to the promiscuous assemblage than to the unit man? Has not its ministry been more that of a formal church to a vague world, than of person to person, soul to soul? How little, too, has been the indirect usefulness of the church! The multitudes have not gathered round her for many ages now: she has no attraction for them; and how to bring the millions within her precincts is the present all-absorbing problem of the good. My solution is this:—Let the church minister Christianity after the fashion of its Model, and the people will flock to it as doves to the windows yet.

“LIFE is the one universal soul, which, by virtue of the enlivening Breath, and the informing Word, all organized bodies have in common, each after its kind. This, therefore, all animals possess, and man as an animal. But, in addition to this, God transfused into man a higher gift, and specially imbreathed: even a living—that is, a self-subsisting—soul; a soul having its life in itself. *And man became a living soul.* He did not merely possess it—he became it. It was his proper being, his truest self, the man in the man. None then—not one of human kind—so poor and destitute, but there is provided for him, even in his present state, *a house not built with hands*; ay, and spite of the philosophy—falsely so called—which mistakes the causes, the conditions, and the occasions of our becoming conscious of certain truths and realities for the truths and realities themselves—a house gloriously furnished. Nothing is wanted but the eye which is the light of this house, the light which is the eye of this soul. This seeing light, this enlightening eye, is reflection. It is more, indeed, than is ordinarily meant by that word; but it is what a Christian ought to mean by it, and to know, too, whence it first came, and still continues to come—of what light even this light is but a reflection. This, too, is thought: and all thought is but unthinking that does not flow out of this, or tend towards it.”—Coleridge.

Glances at some of the Great Preachers of England.

No. II.—JEREMY TAYLOR.

(Continued from page 138.)

ACCORDING to promise, we are now to take a brief “glance” at the literary productions of the renowned Bishop of Dromore. Neither our space allows, nor our inclination prompts us to attempt a long, laboured *critique* of his “works,” arranging them in a chronological order, or dividing them into their several species, as *practical, theological, casuistic, and devotional*.

“Honour to whom honour is due.” Let all things occupy their proper place. Let mind have the precedence of matter, and let the endowments of a great man’s soul be reverentially contemplated, according to their own relative value, rather than in reference to their chronological development, or the logical forms they may happen accidentally to assume. Under the impulse of this spirit, we may “glance” at Taylor in two points of view: we may look at him as a *Christian* man, and as an *intellectual* man.

I. TAYLOR WAS A CHRISTIAN MAN.

1. He was truly *evangelical*. That he *was* a Christian man—truly pious and good, in a scriptural and an evangelical sense—none but the sourest and most exclusive of bigots will now attempt to deny. It is true that his writings do not abound with detailed views of the *theory* of the Gospel, with dogmatic teachings concerning “the atonement,” “justification by faith,” and other leading elements of evangelical truth. This fact is admitted, and, in some sense, is to be regretted, considering the wide extent and influence of his writings; but let it not excite prejudice to the detriment of the bishop’s evangelical sentiments. The fact is, perhaps, to

be accounted for from his not having *much* sympathy with the style of some portion of the prevailing theology of his times, which certainly dealt in “*covenants*,” and “*systems*,” “*creeds*” and “*catechisms*,” most copiously, if not *usque ad nauseam*. In looking at the wide theological space between Lambeth and the “Westminster Assembly,” between Bishop Laud and Dr. Owen, perhaps Taylor remembered, and tried to reduce to practice, the ancient proverb, “Thou wilt walk safely in the *middle path* ;” or perhaps his mental tendencies and tastes prevented his giving forth a “body of divinity.” He was more devotional than speculative, more practical than theoretical, more of a poet than a logician. He delighted to contemplate religion rather in its concrete substance than in its abstract form—rather as a garden full of fertile trees and fragrant flowers than as a *hortus siccus*, in which the forms of nature are indeed preserved, but from which the sap and fragrance and life are fled. He found little pleasure in *dissecting* religion; he preferred rather to gaze upon her as she lives, breathes, and moves, clothed in loveliest garments, with grace in her every step, and in her every look those bright beamings of heavenly holiness, happiness, benevolence, and hope, which at once demonstrate her origin and mission, her nature and her destiny. No sensible Christian doubts that John Foster was truly, essentially evangelical; yet how little of the peculiar doctrines of “*grace*” and the “*Gospel*”—as *some* interpret the words—do his invaluable writings contain. The essence and spirit of the Gospel pervade the pages of Bishop Taylor, as they do those of John Foster: hence we conclude that the former, like the latter, was a truly evangelical, Christian man.

2. Taylor was eminently *devotional*. We do not thus speak of him because of the numerous and excellent *forms* of prayer which he composed and committed to the press. In his day, as in ours, there was a good market for pious commodities of all kinds; and then, as now, a man might publish his parcels of sermons and prayers merely to “put money in his purse.” But we term Taylor a devotional

man because he was *known* to be such, and because the spirit which pervades his writings is pre-eminently "the spirit of prayer"—the spirit of one who could say, with the apostles, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son the Lord Jesus Christ." Here let us indulge our readers with two or three exquisite passages upon prayer, which we think none but a very devotional Christian could possibly have penned.

In the context of the first passage, he has spoken of some things which often mar and weaken a Christian's supplication, and then he says:—"For prayer is an action, and a state of intercourse and desire exactly contrary to this character of anger. Prayer is an action of likeness to the Holy Ghost, the spirit of gentleness and dove-like simplicity—an imitation of the holy Jesus, whose spirit is meek up to the biggest example, and a conformity to God; whose anger is always just, and marches slowly, and is without transportation, and often hindered, and never hastes, and is full of mercy. Prayer is the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection, the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our tempest. Prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts; it is the daughter of Charity, and the sister of Meekness; and he that prays to God with an angry—that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit—is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the out-quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier garrison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention which presents our prayers in a right line to God: for so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest than he could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings, till the little creature wa^s

forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight and did rise and sing as if it had learned music and singing from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries here below. So is the prayer of a good man. When his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duties met with the infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument, and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raises a tempest, and overruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up toward a cloud, and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention, and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose the prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed and his spirit is becalmed like the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy Dove, and dwells with God, till it returns like the bee, laden with the blessing and the dew of heaven."

Let the ministers of the sanctuary "read, learn, and inwardly digest" the two following noble and solemn passages upon prayer:—

"A man of an ordinary piety is like Gideon's fleece, wet in its own locks, but it could not water a poor man's garden; and so does a thirsty land drink all the dew of heaven that wets its face, and a greater shower makes no torrent, nor digs so much as a little furrow, that the drills of the water might pass into rivers, or refresh their neighbours' weariness; but when the earth is full, and hath no strange consumptive needs, then, at the next time when God blesses it with a gracious shower, it divides into portions, and sends it abroad in free and equal communications, that all who stand round about may feel the shower. So is the good man's prayer. His own cup is full; it is crowned with health, and overflows with blessing; and all that drink of his cup, and eat at his table, are refreshed with his joys

and divide with him his holy portions. And, indeed, he hath need of a great stock of piety who is first to provide for his own necessities, and then to give portions to a numerous relation. It is a great matter that every man needs for himself the daily expenses of his own infirmities, the unthriving state of his own omission of duties, and recessions from perfection, and sometimes the great losses and shipwrecks, the plundering and burning of his house, by a fall into a deadly sin; and most good men are in this condition, that they have enough to do to live, and keep themselves above water; but how few men are able to pay their own debts and lend great portions to others? The number of those who can effectually intercede for others to great purposes of grace and pardon are as soon told as the number of wise men, as the gates of a city, or the entries of the river Nilus."

And again:—

"But all who have a care to walk with God fill their vessels more largely, as soon as they rise, before they begin the work of the day, and before they lie down again at night; which is to observe what the Lord appointed in the Levitical ministry—a morning and evening lamb to be laid upon the altar. So with them who are not slack in religion, prayer is the key to open the day, and the bolt to shut in the night. But as the skies drop the early dew and the evening dew upon the grass, yet it would not spring and grow green by that constant and double falling of the dew unless some great showers, at certain seasons, did supply the rest: so the customary devotion of prayer twice a day is the falling of the early and the latter dew; but if you will increase and flourish in the works of grace, empty the great clouds sometimes, and let them fall into a full shower of prayer: choose out the seasons, in your own discretion, when prayer shall overflow like Jordan in the time of harvest."

3. Taylor was of an eminently *loving* and *catholic* spirit.

The times in which Taylor lived, the circumstances in which he was placed, the sufferings he endured, and even the triumphs he achieved, were but little favourable to the culti-

vation of that fraternal affection and expansive benevolence which are the genius and the glory of the Christian religion. The days in which his lot was cast were days of controversy, strife, and bloodshed. If it is difficult for a sailor to be amiable in a storm, or a soldier to be affectionate in a battle, can we wonder that when the parliament was struggling against the prince, the peer against the plebeian, bishop against presbyter, church against church, sect against sect, man against man, the lovely fruits of Christian affection should have been injured and almost destroyed amidst such shocks and storms? Can we wonder that in such times a Dr. South should appear—a man famous for the acuteness of his wit, and for the poisonous bitterness in which his arrows were dipped—as wise as a serpent, and as venomous? Who can wonder that in such a time the pious Baxter should have “slept in his armour,” ever ready to do *battle* for the church, in order to preserve her *peace*? All honour to Taylor, and the thrice noble few, who in such times could at once be loyal to the claims of conscience and of charity; whose lovely spirit poured oil upon the troubled waters; whose gentle utterances came like the balmy breath of spring amidst the blast of winter, like a shower amidst the desert sands, or like the sunbeam across a dark thunder-bearing cloud. When we look upon such men as John Howe and Jeremy Taylor, and see their gifted minds enrobed in the graceful, heaven-wove vestments of charity, and compare them with combative controversialists and ferocious “defenders of the faith,” how are we reminded of the noble saying, “It is good to prove religion *true*: it is better to cause it to be *loved*.” “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”

We must reserve our remarks upon Taylor's *intellectual* character for a future number, and conclude with one of his beautiful descriptions of that happy world where the cavillings and controversies of earth are unknown; where “charity never faileth:” where “we shall not know in part, nor prophesy in part;” where “Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

nor Ephraim envy Judah;" where "we shall see, eye to eye;" where "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days;" when "the Lord bindeth up the *breach* of his people, and healeth the *stroke* of their *wound*."

"When the Christian's last pit is digged; when he is descended to his grave, and hath finished his state of sorrows and suffering; then God opens the river of abundance, the rivers of life and never-ceasing felicities. And this is that which God promised to his people:—'I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.' So much as moments are exceeded by eternity, and the sighing of a may by the joys of an angel, and a salutary frown by the light of God's countenance, a few groans by the infinite and eternal hallelujahs; so much are the sorrows of the godly to be undervalued, in respect of that which is deposited for them in the treasures of eternity. Their sorrows can die, but so cannot their joys. And if the blessed martyrs and confessors were asked concerning their past sufferings, and their present rest, and the joys of their certain expectation, you should hear them glory in nothing but the mercies of God, and 'in the cross of the Lord Jesus.' Every chain is a ray of light, and every prison is a palace, and every loss is the purchase of a kingdom, and every affront in the cause of God is an eternal honour, and every day of sorrow is a thousand years of comfort, multiplied with a never-ceasing numeration; days without night, joys without sorrow, sanctity without sin, charity without stain, possession without fear, society without envying, communication of joys without lessening: and they shall dwell in a blessed country, where an enemy never entered, and from whence a friend never wen away."

(To be continued).

LITERARY NOTICES.

PROVIDENCE AND PROPHECY; or, God's Hand Fulfilling his Word:
more especially in the Revolutions of 1848, and Subsequent Events.
By REV. WILLIAM REES.

THIS book is not to be classed with the miserable rubbish which is ever issuing from the press on "unfulfilled prophecy" and "apocalyptic vision"—subjects before which profound spirits stand off in awe, but which seem to have a mysterious attraction for the rhodomontadal, superficial, and popularity-seeking minds. Regarding the Bible references to Popery as directed to the Popery of *men* rather than that of systems; the Popery of the depraved soul rather than that of any particular church; and loathing as we do the heterodoxy of the life more than the heterodoxy of the brain; we are not able to subscribe to all this book contains. In stating this we are not afraid of incurring the displeasure of the author, who, with the mingled modesty and daring of a truly great mind, says in his preface, "Let tender mercy be extended to the style, but stern justice to the sentiments." We appreciate this book, not merely because it abounds with important historic information, and teems with noble sentiments, but because it breathes the breath of life—free, unaffected, vigorous life, capable of far higher developments than appear on its pages. We shall be right glad to meet our author soon again in our literary walk, and earnestly trust that the man who has filled Wales with his name, and is enlightening and interesting her with his Welsh pen, will turn his attention a little more to his Saxon neighbours.

RELIGION AND BUSINESS; or, Spiritual Life in one of its Secular Departments. By A. J. MORRIS. Ward and Co.

THERE are two sore evils amongst us—the theoretical secularism of the sceptic, and the practical secularism of the church. In lecture-rooms, on controversial platforms, and in books, these are widely dissimilar; but in the market, and the every-day duties of life, there is such a correspondence between many of the professed followers of Jesus

and the disciples of Owen as to baffle the discriminating faculty. One spirit animates them. Their commercial aims are one: to one goal, with equal eagerness, they direct their steps. When we think of the *hypocrisy* of acting contrary to our profession, the sin of *misrepresenting* Christianity to the world, we are disposed to regard the practical secularism of the church as the greater evil. It seems to us, therefore, far more befitting for *practical* spiritualists to seek to preach out the Demases from the church, than to preach in the Holyoakes from the world. Indeed, success in the latter is not to be expected until the accomplishment of the former. Mr. Morris's little book bears powerfully, so far as it goes, against the greater evil. "It is not," as the author says, "controversial nor doctrinal, but practical. It is addressed directly to the conscience and the life." It is free alike from theological common-places and philosophic disquisitions. It abounds with healthy counsels; it suggests more than it contains. It is small in compass, but big in meaning; rich in thought, and racy in style.

LAYS OF THE FUTURE. By W. LEASK. Partridge and Co.

WE judge of poetry as we judge of beauty—by the general impression it makes upon our emotional nature. We shrink at the idea of having the object that captivates us questioned and cross-questioned at the cold bar of intellect. When our heart swells and surges under the gales of true poetry, your metres, artistic canons, analogical proprieties, and all else pertaining to mere *poetics*, go for nothing. Determining, as we do, the quality and power of poetry by the kind and measure of sentiment it evolves, we prize the "Lays of the Future." Great truths, wrought oftentimes into forms of exquisite beauty, appear amidst the *scintillations* of every page.



A HOMILY

ON

The Sphere of the Pulpit ; or, the Mission of Ministers.

“ But by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”—2 Cor. iv. 2.

Or all classes of the community, teachers sustain the most important and honourable position. The artizan, the merchant, the lawyer, the physician, the statesman, sustain offices which dwindle into insignificance when compared with that of a teacher. He has to do directly with mind, and generally with mind in its most impressible and mouldable condition. He acts on the mainspring of society, and may throw the whole machinery into confusion, or assist in giving harmony to its movements, and utility to its results. The outlines of a nation’s history are drawn in schools : there the intellectual and model types of future men are formed. The habits and conduct of the men of this age are but the actualizations of the ideas and lessons they received at school. The teacher stands nearest the world’s heart ; he is up at the fountain of moral and social life, and may give to its streams what tinge and direction he please. It is a sad reflection on the intelligence and moral insight of the age, that its most valuable functionary should be so little appreciated and so badly remunerated. It will not be always so ; brighter times are coming for the true instructor of his age. As intelligence advances, and the paramount claims of

mind become recognized, society will award to him the highest honours it has to bestow.

But of all the teachers, the religious teacher occupies the highest position. Of all functionaries of society, we award to him the pre-eminence, for reasons that shall hereafter appear. I am aware that but few will agree with me in this judgment, and many, perhaps, will treat it as the vain dream of an individual who has an overweening conceit for the office he has assumed. The speculative world thinks of the religious teacher as one who has more of soft sentiment than vigorous sense; the dispenser of hacknied dogmas, rather than the enunciator of broad, soul-quickenng, and self-digested truths; one who is the member and advocate of a little sect, rather than the brother and friend of universal man. The pulpit it looks to as a thing effete—an old tree, that was prolific in other ages, under whose clustered branches the good of past times sat and fed, but is now worn out. It has scarcely any foliage, has seldom any blossom, and is little else than a cumberer of the ground. It can only be tolerated as a relic of antiquity amidst the abounding verdure and rich fruitage of this age of mental fertilities. How far these opinions apply to conventional pulpits, and existing forms of religious instruction, is a matter for deep and serious inquiry—an inquiry which, I fear, would lead to humiliating discoveries. But such an investigation comes not within the scope of our present purpose. We are far enough from setting up a defence for things as they are in this respect. We have to observe the merits of religious teaching, not as it *is*, or *has been*, but as it *ought* to be; to exhibit the pulpit, not as we see it in the hands of men, but as we find it portrayed in the system of Christ: and we shall, I think, find that, whatever objections men may have to pulpits and preachers, the pulpit and the preaching prescribed by Christianity, and which we advocate, supply the deepest wants of humanity, and are, therefore, the world's greatest blessings. Let us proceed to some illustrations of the importance of the pulpit, as suggested by the passage before us:—

I. THAT THE PULPIT HAS CHIEFLY TO DEAL WITH THE COMMON CONSCIENCE OF HUMANITY. "Commending ourselves to every man's conscience." Every man has a conscience. Philosophers differ in their analyses and definitions of this part of human nature, but they agree, for the most part, as to the fact of its existence, and the general circle of its action. Though some call it a faculty, some an emotion, some a law, all acknowledge a power in the human constitution differing widely from those faculties which inquire into the truth or falsehood of propositions, or the gains and losses of conduct—a power which concerns itself exclusively with the right and wrong of actions; which points the soul to law, retribution, and God. If I were to venture on any exposition of this wonderful constituent of our nature, I would say that it is not so much a faculty of being as the very *stamina* and *substance* of being; that it is what Paul calls it—"the inner man"—the man of the man—that without which we should be sensuous organisms or thinking animals, but not men. This gives a felt connexion with the spiritual universe. "Whenever," says one of the most brilliant, though often wild and visionary, writers of this age, "the sentiment of right comes in, it takes precedence of everything else. For other things, I make poetry of them, but the moral sentiment makes poetry of me." As, without the physical senses, I could never feel my connexion with this material system—the green earth beneath my feet, and the blue heavens that encircle me, would be nothing without them—so, without this conscience, this moral sense, I could have no idea either of moral government or God. Had you no conscience, I might as well endeavour to give to one that is born blind and deaf the idea of beauty and sweet sounds, as to give to you the idea of duty and God.

Now, to this primary part of your nature the religious teacher has to appeal. There is a ministry which mainly aims at the *passions*. Hope and fear are the elements principally appealed to. The sermons are made up of denunciations and promises, perils and escapes, gains and losses, heaven and hell. If the emotions are stirred, if tears

flow, if persons swoon away under terrific apprehensions of wrath, the discourse is considered powerful and effective. Amongst minds untrained to thinking this will always be popular. But I am bound to express my ever-deepening conviction, that to aim at the rousing of these selfish passions, as an end, is to obstruct the true progress of virtue, to depress the higher faculties of our nature, and to misrepresent the rational system of the Son of God. Religion consists not in an endeavour to flee from hell, or in strenuous struggles to attain heaven, but in loving and practising goodness for its own sake: so loving holiness and right as to brave perils, endure sufferings, and forego joys, if necessary, on its behalf.

There is a religious teaching, too, which aims mainly at the *imagination*. Beauty is the idea. Whatever, in thought or form, in sentiment or style, will please the taste and charm the fancy, are freely introduced. Poetic pictures and sonorous periods are forms into which all the ideas are thrown. The preacher is constantly endeavouring to spin out of his own fancy some gaudy garb for truth. I know of nothing more repugnant to the deep sense of moral propriety within us than to see a little man, with the awful Bible before him, attempting to dress off God's truth in the tawdry robes of his own imagination. Truth does not require your painting, brother; *it is itself beauty*. Unfold it, and men will be captivated. Take your brush to set off the rainbow, or give a new tinge of splendour to the setting sun, but keep it away from the "rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley."

There is, moreover, a ministry which aims mainly at the *intellect*. Verbal criticisms, philosophic discussions, subtle distinctions, ingenious hypotheses, are the stable elements of its discourses, and the whole performance is exclusively intellectual.

Now, I am far from supposing that religious teaching ought not to wake the passions, nor charm the imagination, nor heave and stretch the intellect; but I do feel that to aim at these as ends is to pervert religious teaching. The true teacher has to do with *conscience*—that which underlies

and penetrates every other spiritual faculty and power in man. His work is to expound duty, rather than dismantle hell; to develop principles, rather than draw pictures; to inwork conviction, rather than to work up a creed. If he moves conscience, he will move every other power—move the soul, uplift the man.

But whilst all men have consciences, their consciences are found existing in very different conditions. Perhaps no two are identical in position and phase, and the pulpit has to deal with “every man’s conscience.” For the sake of convenience, we may put all consciences into three general classes:—

First. *The torpid class.* There are two classes of torpid consciences—those that have never been awakened; and those which, having been aroused, have relapsed into insensibility again. The former comprehends the consciences of children in the first stages of their existence, prior to the introduction of moral ideas into their minds, before the intellect has opened its eye, when they are conscious of nothing but animal sensations; also those belonging to such uneducated barbarians as those to whom Moffatt refers, as having no idea of God. The consciences of all infants, and such adult barbarians, are torpid. They are as yet imbedded in the flesh; they have never been aroused. They sleep as the winged insect in the chrysalis—as the majestic oak in the acorn that has no soil. And the latter class of this general division involves those which were once awakened by conviction, but which have sunk into apathy again—those of which the Scriptures speak as “seared,” as “past feeling,” as “twice dead.” It is a solemn fact, that a state of *torpor* is the general state in which the conscience is found to last. Turn over the pages of universal history; look the world through; search its literature, institutions, trades, professions, amusements; and whilst you see the flames of *passion* reddening the sky of ages; and the creations of *imagination*, in endless “shapes and shades,” filling the horizon; and the inventions of *genius*, and the theories of *intellect*, piled mountains high on every hand; the godlike

products of CONSCIENCE are all but absent and unknown. There is—

Secondly. *The alarmed class.* There are thousands, both in heathen and Christian lands, to whom the outward law of God, in some form, has come, and roused them from their slumbers. “They are pricked to the heart.” They writhe under the agonizing sense of sin. They are like the youth, who, having been enticed by the inebriating cup to sell himself to military life, wakes up in terror the next day, and finds that he has no longer any power over himself—that he is a slave. Or like the mariner, who wakes from his sleep, and finds that his vessel is struggling in a tempest that it is unable to outride. There is—

Thirdly. *The peaceful class*—those consciences from which the sense of guilt has been removed—which have won a conquest over all the inner antagonists of the soul; which soul has ascended the throne, grasped the sceptre, is ever carrying out the will of God, and is rejoicing in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom it has received the atonement. This is the state into which Christianity is designed to put the conscience, and that which involves the complete well-being of humanity.

Now, in one of these general classes every man’s conscience is to be found. Indeed, the true Christian man has passed through the first two, and is settled down in the last. In the seventh chapter of the epistle to the Romans, where the writer gives, as I understand him, a moral history of the “inner man,” the spiritual ME—*conscience*—on its way up to the glorious privileges detailed in the succeeding chapter, we have conscience passing from the first class to the second, from the second to the third, where it remains and triumphs in the blessings of Christianity. The conscience is first torpid under the absolute control of the flesh; next aroused, and in violent conflict with the flesh; and the next enthroned, and in perfect triumph over the flesh. These are stages through which the moral I of man pursues its career upward to celestial joys.

II. THE PULPIT HAS TO DEAL WITH THE COMMON CONSCIENCE OF HUMANITY, THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF THE TRUTH. By the "manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience." There is no difficulty in determining what the apostle means here by "the truth," for in this very verse he calls it the "word of God," and in the following, "our gospel"—that is, the system of doctrine which he adopted and preached. To the apostle's mind, therefore, the special revelation of God developed in the teaching, embodied in the life, and illustrated in the death of Jesus, was *the truth*—the truth humanity wanted to raise itself from its fallen state—the sin-correcting and soul-saving truth. The apostle, as a man of mind and intelligence, saw truth everywhere, breathing in pagan systems, sparkling in philosophical speculations, and circulating in the general current of common language and common life; but this was *the truth*. Other truths seem to borrow their light from this. This was the central truth, that uncovered in daylight the awful heavens of being, and blessed with new life and beauty this fallen earth. This truth shed its radiance upon the God-ward and man-ward bearings of sin, and unfolded, at the same time, "the path of life" for depraved humanity. Now, this truth the apostle sought to *manifest* so as to commend himself to "every man's conscience," and that his history shows him to have accomplished. He moved the conscience of his age by this potent instrument. He spoke, and thousands of those consciences "which slept in their graves arose," and went into the holy city of spiritual freedom, happiness, and truth.

How, it may be asked, can the religious teacher bring this truth to bear effectively upon the conscience now? This is the question which presses heavily on the heart of the most earnest spirits of our times. On all hands it is manifest that the gospel has but little to do with the conscience now-a-days. It plays about the outward faculties, it does not enter the penetralia of the soul; it has but a flimsy hold upon the moral ME of humanity. We take one expression

from the writings of our apostle as indicating the way in which he made the truth tell upon the conscience, and which may go some way towards the solution of the momentous problem in hand; and that expression is this: "As the truth is in Jesus." How did Paul *manifest* the truth? Not as it appeared in the hoary traditions of the fathers, or in the uninteresting technics and misty formulæ of sapless systems, but as it appeared in Jesus. I find elements of truth in Jesus exactly suited to each of the three classes of conscience. What is the element of truth in Jesus required to *rouse* the dormant conscience? Manifestly the *ethical*. Moral law sustains a relation to conscience somewhat analogous to the relation which light sustains to the eye. The eye is a perfect organism, whether visited by light or not; but unless the light fall on it, it will be a dead and useless thing, the sensation of vision will never be enjoyed. In like manner, the conscience is an exquisite moral organ in the soul—an eye formed to gaze upon the INFINITE; but unless the light of moral law fall on it, it will be dead and useless. It is when the outward *commandment* comes that the conscience sees itself in the light of God, and exclaims, "The law is spiritual, but I am carnal—sold under sin." What is the element of truth in Jesus required to *pacify* the alarmed conscience? The *redemptive*, the pardoning, mercy of God alone can tranquillize a conscience excited under a sense of its guilt. And what is the element required to strengthen, encourage, and to urge on to nobler efforts and higher attainments, the pacified conscience? The *alimential*, the universal and ever-suggesting, principles of Divine truth. These various elements of truth, suited to the consciences of mankind, I find in Jesus. Numerous are the instances in which he brings them out respectively with remarkable appropriateness and power. I see the first penetrating the soul of the young man who comes to inquire of him the way to eternal life; I see the second soothing the agitated heart of the penitent woman who washes his feet with her tears, and wipes them with the

hair of her head; and I see the third uplifting the spirit of his disciples that evening when he "sat down with the twelve" for the last time.

The pulpit, then, if it would do its work—if it would properly deal with the conscience—must manifest the TRUTH AS IN JESUS. It must cease to be the organ of party polemics, human formalities, empty platitudes, euphuistic inanities, abstract speculations, and of all such earthly vanities. It must become the mouth of Christ, speak *what* Christ spoke in his earnest, simple, conversational, natural way. The world, though disgusted with your *isms*, will yet come back to the pulpit if it manifest the truth as in Jesus. Truth in him is not a dogma, but a life; not a mere letter, but a spirit. It is a thing of beauty and power. It meets the moral soul of humanity as light meets the eye, as water the parched tongue, as bread the hungry soul. It is wonderfully suggestive; it opens a boundless realm for thought. The most comprehensive system of theology in existence is but as a little garden cut out from the great continents of the earth as compared with the truth as in Jesus. Shall the pulpit consent to be shut up within the narrow precincts of these little plots, while the outspread territories lie before it? No; let it go abroad into the green pastures which the great Shepherd has provided; enter the land flowing with milk and honey; penetrate the rich vineyards of Judea; pluck the grapes from Eshcol; and breathe the free and fragrant, balmy and bracing air that sweeps over the shores of Galilee and the mountains of Capernaum.

I infer from this passage—

III. THAT THE PULPIT HAS CHIEFLY TO DEAL WITH THE COMMON CONSCIENCE OF HUMANITY THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF THE TRUTH, UNDER THE FELT INSPECTION OF ALMIGHTY GOD. "In the sight of God." The apostle, in all his endeavours to act upon the human conscience through the "manifestation of the truth," realized the constant presence and oversight of the great Father of spirits. He set the

Lord always before him : he toiled and suffered in the holy enterprise as “seeing Him who is invisible.” This abiding consciousness of the Divine inspection seems to me an indispensable qualification for pulpit power with the conscience. There are three causes of pulpit inefficiency which this would remove :—First. *Man-fear*. By this I do not mean that deep awe which every thoughtful man will have as he stands in the presence of souls—that reverence for the majesty of natures which are emanations of the eternal, conscious heirs of the interminable hereafter, and original fountains of everlasting influence. Would there were more of this in the pulpit. I repudiate the advice that is sometimes given to the young minister, to be regardless of his auditory, and to heed his hearers no more than “stones or stumps.” I would have him tremble with a sobering awe at those deathless intelligences which he is presuming to influence for eternity. Were there more of this, there would be less of those postulations and flippancies which too often offend and repel the sober, truth-seeking souls. But, by the fear of man, I mean that which arises from an over-anxiety about man’s opinion of ourselves—an inordinate desire to avoid his disfavour, and to ensure his approbation and his praise. This feeling, which is by no means uncommon to the pulpit, is most enervating. The speaker who is under its influence is weak for the time being : he is the slave, not the sovereign, of his audience ; his speech resembles the hesitant lisp of a child, rather than the full, articulate utterance of the man. Secondly. *Affectation* is another cause of pulpit weakness. Wherever in the ministry the tones are feigned, the actions studied, and the discourses wear more the impress of artifice than heart, there will always be the want of power over conscience. The imagination may be pleased with the artistic, but the conscience has no sympathy with aught but *genuine* nature : the roughest tones and the most grotesque gesticulations of nature have far greater power over it than the most refined cadences and graceful movements of art. “We firmly

believe," says a modern writer, "that a sermon of moderate literary merit, coming fresh from the preacher's heart, and dictated by a knowledge of the circumstances of his people, will tell more powerfully, and be far more useful, than the sublimest pulpit meditations of a Bossuet, a Howe, or a Hall." And, thirdly, *dullness* is another cause of pulpit inefficiency. Sermons and dullness have almost become synonymous in the world's vocabulary. Often—where the thoughts are scriptural, the manner pleasing, the style chaste, the elocution fine—there is such a lack of life as to make the whole somnific. Unless life breathe in its thoughts, tremble in its tones, and pulsate through the whole in all the variety of its impulses, the pulpit will never touch the conscience of humanity. How are these causes to be removed? Let the preacher feel himself "in the sight of God," and they will all be dissipated: let him feel that God is one of his auditors, and *man-fear* will depart. His spirit will rise superior to all ideas about the smiles or favours of man. Let him feel that the eye of the heart-searching God is on his spirit, and all *affectation* will end. His simple nature will show itself in every gesture, look, and tone. Yes; and then, too, all apathy and dullness will pass away. The deepest sympathies of the soul will heave under the eye of God, as the forest and field under the breath of spring, throwing out new forms of life and beauty every hour. Oh! let the pulpit feel itself under the eye of God, and it will manifest the truth with that manly independency, unsophisticated naturalness, and *genuine* enthusiasm, which will commend it to the moral consciousness of humanity. Let it appeal to man's consciousness through Christ's Gospel, under God's eye, and it will get the ear of the world yet, and a glorious career of spiritual power and conquest will be opened up to it in the on-coming periods of man's history.

"Would I describe a preacher such as Paul,
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
His master-strokes, and draw from his design.

I would express him simple, grave, sincere ;
 In doctrine uncorrupt ; in language plain,
 And plain in manner ; decent, solemn, chaste,
 And natural in gesture. Much impressed
 Himself, as conscious of his awful charge ;
 And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
 May feel it too. Affectionate in look,
 And tender in address, as well becomes
 A messenger of grace to guilty man."

We proceed now to note two practical thoughts arising out of the general subject :—

First. *The worth of the true pulpit.* It is a philosophical fact, confirmed by all history and experience, that man can never advance in true power, dignity, and happiness, without the right development of his conscience. Unless his conscience be with him in his spheres of action, there will be but little muscle in his efforts, and but little force in his purposes ; but if his conscience should be against him, he will be the weak and agitated child of fear. National greatness, and high civilization, unless based on a rightly educated conscience, are but as houses on the sand : they may lift their head high above the barbarism of other times, spread out their magnificent proportions in the breathless air, and glitter in the sun, but they afford no true protection for humanity ; they cannot stand ; with the first social tempest they will fall. In neither the individual nor corporate capacity can man truly rise, only as he is upborne by the moral forces of his soul : in sooth, every outward thing is evermore to him according to the state of his conscience. As it is, so is the universe to him. If it be *torpid*, its fair forms will have no divine significance—no heart-inspiration ; if it be *alarmed* it will be chaos : there will be no music in its vibrations, no beauty in its forms ; if it be *pacified*, it will bloom like Eden, and be filled with the glory of God. Man's universe and man's God come mirrored to him through his conscience. Let that conscience be not like "the troubled sea," but like "the sea of glass," tranquil

and translucent, and all-enrapturing will be the inner reflections of all outward beings and things.

Whatever power, therefore, in society serves most to develop conscience, must be regarded as incomparably the most valuable; and this is the mission of the pulpit. There are powers in society which minister to other parts of our common nature. Science and literature, poetry and art, stimulate and strengthen certain faculties within us, and we would not underrate their helpful service; but you may have a mind as cultivated as Gibbon's, an intellect as keen as Voltaire's, and an imagination as majestic as Byron's, and yet a conscience either ossified through habits of depravity, or tumultuous under a sense of guilt. CHRISTIANITY is the only effective minister to the human conscience. Neither your gross *secularism* on the one hand, nor your shadowy *transcendentalism* on the other, can do the work the conscience needs. For this, Christ raised the pulpit in society: he instituted it as the organ to transmit his thoughts to conscience. Let it keep to its own sphere. Let its aim ever be to develop the conscience of humanity, rouse it from its lethargy, guide it in its struggles, and help it to the throne, and then it will be in fact what it is in profession—the highest power of society—"the power of God!" Then it will be the leader of public opinion, ever fitted to minds of the most advanced class, and thus free itself from the charges which even its friends allege against it.* Then it need not fear the ever-advancing

* "The truth is, that while the age has progressed, the pulpit has stood still. The style of modern preaching is not materially changed from what it was two centuries ago. The same explanation of the same texts; the same ever-recurring platitudes and common-places; the same boltless thunders of threatening and warning; the same sheet-lightnings of copious and ineffectual declamation; the same tone of priestly insolence and *hauteur*; the same fierce and rancorous partyism, abound as they did in the past. Nay, some there are who deliberately stereotype the mode of preaching, and insist that we in this day must reproduce the exact style and manner of the Covenanters or the Puritans, and that every minister to be successful must become a second Baxter, or a Rutherford redivivus. This is not possible, and it were not desirable if it were possible. As well regret the loss of the grimaces which their preachers

power of the press as its rival. It has powers peculiar to itself—untransferable attributes. It has a mission of its own, and that mission being the education of the *moral consciousness* of the world, it is of transcendent importance. The pen will never supersede the tongue—cold, ink characters

made, and the strange gamut which they sung. Even Paul himself, were he returning to the church, would in all probability change his mode of address. 'Righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,' would still be his themes; the result would be again that Felix would tremble at his oratory; his way to the heart or conscience would still be a *terribilis via*; but there would be important diversities in his tone, his language, the line of his argument, and the course of his appeal. Paul was inspired as a writer; but there is no evidence that as a preacher he was perfect, or meant as a complete or final model for us. Chrysostom did not preach like Paul but like Chrysostom, even as Paul had not preached like Jesus but like Paul; Luther did not preach like any of the three, but like Luther; Knox copied not Calvin in his preaching, nor Melville Knox, nor Chalmers or Hall, or any of them all. The beauty, power, and glory of preaching have always lain, if not in absolute originality, yet in new adaptation of old truth to new circumstances. And, on the other hand, the weakness, contempt, and degradation of preaching have lain, and do lie still, in slavish conformity to models in the form of sermon, abounding with the heads, and particulars, and inferences, the 'ohs' and 'ahs' of old sermons, imitating, too, their tone of sanctity, and accompanied by the whining voice and the starched aspect which belonged to a bygone day. How many the preachers who seem to imagine that man's religion, like his life, lies in his nostrils, or who deem that length of visage is a measure for piety and power, or who mistake a compound of clamour and cant for eloquence, or who confound the mere phraseology and technical theological language of our ancestors with their living fire and solemn earnestness? These are the men who disgust and weary the young intelligence of our day, whose sermons present a contrast so striking to the amenities and manly genialities of our current literature, and who may be said, indeed, unintentionally on their part, to be most masterly pioneers in the road of infidelity. Even the reprints of many of our old divines exert very little influence upon the rising mind; and how much less can we expect that their pulpit caricatures can? Under this we may notice the base practice of plagiarism which abounds among the clergy of this country. Anecdotes and instances corroborative of this statement crowd upon our recollection. It is not with occasional pilferings, with petty larceny, that we charge many of them, but with systematic and wholesale theft. This practice is very widely spread. We have known of ministers whose libraries consisted almost entirely of sermons, and who were more than suspected of never preaching any of their own. How delightful this must have been to their audiences? To be regaled in the morning with Saurin, and in the afternoon with Hall, and to have Chalmers thundering over their heads in the evening—why, they must have felt like bees passing, in varied luxury of enjoyment, from the tulip to the lily, and from the lily to the rose!"—*Eclectic Review*.

can never achieve the ends of the warm, sympathetic voice. Truth written, as compared with truth spoken, is as the winter to the summer sky: it may be clear and calm, unfolding the distinctive form and peculiar hue of all the objects on which its beams descend, but it is cold—very cold. Under its influence the landscape will wither, and the rivers will freeze. Philosophically, *the greatest want of the world is a true pulpit.*

Another thought suggested is—

Secondly. *The qualification for the true pulpit.* If the grand mission of ministers is to deal with the conscience, then they must be *pre-eminently men of conscience*. The *moral* in them must transcend the intellectual, as the intellectual transcends the animal. They must appear before men not as theological gladiators, or party disputants, or literary *savans*, but as the incarnations of the everlasting principles of rectitude—the organs of “heaven’s high morality.” They must be men who look at everything through the eye of conscience, that attach a moral significance to all the revelations of nature and of history; men who loathe all temporizings, and despise the *finesse* of popularity; men who, whilst “they hold the faith”—the orthodoxy which they have conscientiously thought out for themselves—“hold a good conscience” as well, and use no means contrary to the laws of conscience to propagate their own beliefs; men who, if there come into their “assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment,” pay attention neither to the tawdry “ring” of the one, nor the “vile raiment” of the other, nor more than regarding them as effects and signs of moral principles in society to be dealt with and denounced; men who feel a true oneness with the true-hearted of all churches and sects, and who fight against nothing but moral errors—errors of heart and life; men whose natures fire with a holy indignation, and whose voices rise to thunder as mammonism, pride, and selfishness, robed in the sabbatic garb of devotion, appear under

their eye. Have you seen a true man of conscience, my brother? There is an awful majesty about that man: his face shines as the face of Moses when he came down from the mount; "and the hand of the Lord is upon him," as upon the great prophets of old. The glance of his eye, the tone of his voice, and solemn dignity of his mien, lend an incalculable moral force to those mighty principles which he enunciates. Let such men occupy the pulpits of England, and what a moral change would come over our land! We do not want less intellect in the pulpit; God knows, we would have it occupied with the highest order of mind; nor do we want less learning—real learning—learning of ideas as well as words, of the laws of life as well as the laws of language—learning apart from all pretences and pedantries; but we do want more *moral soul*—more CONSCIENCE—INSPIRATION; an inspiration which would make every sermon a lamp to light up the moral scenery of humanity, and make men see and feel whereabouts they are in relation to the spiritual universe, and to God.

"There stands the messenger of truth: there stands
The legate of the skies! His theme divine,
His office sacred, his credentials clear.
By him the violated law speaks out
Its thunder; and by strains as sweet
As angels use, the Gospel whispers peace."

The Pulpit in the Family ;

OR,

A DOMESTIC HOMILY ON GOD-LIKENESS.

“Be ye therefore followers of God.”—EPHES. v. 1.

THERE is nothing little about Christianity : its language, its spirit, and its design give unmistakeable evidence that it has come from God—that it is not of earth, but of heaven. The inspired penmen write and speak as no other men—as no other men could do who had not the consciousness that they were heaven’s appointed messengers, to convey to rebellious men the will of the Almighty. They utter the most momentous truths, and foretell the sublimest events, with the artlessness and simplicity of a child ; they bid us perform the noblest duties ; they excite us to the loftiest aspirations, and urge us to cherish the sublimest hopes, without a shadow of ostentation or self-conceit. They had no idea of men becoming anything less than God-like. They felt “the divinity within them ;” and, with the consciousness of this, and the power of the truth which had so transformed their moral nature, they could look at humanity around them in all its desolate state of moral ruin, and confidently speak of a new creation, and call upon men to repent, and become followers, or imitators, of God. Now, in this exhortation, which Paul addressed to the believers at Ephesus, there are implied three general truths :—

1. That man needs a model for moral imitation, and that model is God.

2. That the model must be seen, and that God unfolds himself for imitation.

3. That the imitating faculty must be possessed, and that man has it.

1. We need a model if we are to imitate, and, in the Christian life, that model is God.

We have here, then, a perfect model. In all imitative arts

the best model is always sought. The young aspirant in the school of painting studies under the shade of a Raphael and a Rubens; the student of music keeps incessant company with a Handel or a Mozart; the candidate for military glory drinks deep into the enthusiasm of a Cæsar or a Napoleon, and has them before him in his day-dreams and night-visions; the Christian says, "Let me have God;" or, with David, "I have set the Lord always before me." If it be requisite, in human models, to have them as free of imperfections as possible, how much more requisite is it when the model is sought to regulate the spiritual life? Self-interest or love of reputation will often so quicken the perceptive faculty in the artist or artizan that he will discover the defects, and avoid them; but, alas! come into the moral world, and men are more awake to imitate the wrong than the right, the erroneous than the true, the man-like than the Divine. Do Christians in our churches always imitate the conduct of the most God-like among them? Do they not often gather around *him* who, with dominant spirit, has thrown the torch of discord into their midst? Does the man who most large-heartedly gives out of his abundance to lessen life's load of sorrow, and allay the deep throbbings of the human heart, secure as many imitators as he does admirers? Our own experience, and the history of the church, evidence too strongly how prone even Christians are to copy the imperfections of men otherwise good and great.

A perfect model, then, is required—an exemplar without a shadow of defect, pure as the crystal stream, bright as the orb of day, and lovely as a sinless paradise. Our God is light. He is so holy that the angels are not pure in his sight; and, as he appears in Christ, he is the altogether lovely. But let us see in what respect, or to what extent, God can be imitated. There are attributes of his character unapproachable by us. We can only contemplate them with awe, and exclaim, "How terrible in thy greatness art thou, O Lord!" We hear his voice in the thunder that shakes the solid earth; we see his might in the desolations of the sweeping storm.

Winds and waves, steep rocks and rolling oceans, are ever and anon proclaiming his power; but who can imitate this? His omniscience, too, and omnipotence, we can only believe and adore. But it is worthy of thought, that could we, in some limited degree, imitate God in some of his physical attributes, it could in itself have no tendency to promote the improvement of our moral nature. Could we stand in the still resting-place of the dead, and raise, by our voices, some sleepless tenant of the tombs, we should, in all probability, be less humble than we were before. Power lodged in our hands would fearfully injure us. Man would not become holy in disposition and life by raising the dead, allaying tempests, or exciting the winds, were he permitted to do so. An hour's virtuous self-sacrifice, or one act of noble self-denial, is of far more value. Now, there are attributes of God which we can, and which we are urged to imitate. Paul contemplated God, as holy souls must do, in those delightful aspects which absorbed his spirit, and fixed his spiritual eye. He speaks of the God of *patience*, the God who is rich in *mercy*, the God of *long-suffering*, the God of all *grace*, the God of everlasting *consolation*; whilst John concentrates these attributes in one, and revels in joyous contemplation of God as Love. In these particulars we can imitate God. In this sense, we were originally made in his likeness. He sympathizes with suffering, and alleviates it; we can feed the hungry, and give the cup of cold water. He showeth mercy: we can forgive. He loves the morally beautiful: we can admire the same. He delights in bestowing gifts: we can realize it more blessed to give than to receive. In these respects it is said that we "become partakers of the Divine nature." Each act performed from right motives tends to the development of our spiritual nature, and increases the desire for repetition. We only grow by action, and we only act to grow as we act like God.

2. We must see the model if we are to copy from it, and God really does present himself for the imitation of his intelligent family.

It is equally true, at the same time, that no man hath seen God at any time, nor can behold a part of his glory and live. What know we of spirit? and what could we know of that Spirit whose presence is everywhere—who fills the past eternity, and who is equally present in the future? He dwelleth in light unapproachable. The mystery of all mysteries is the existence of God. Let not the sceptic plume himself on his boasted assertion that we cannot clear up the mysteries which hang about Christianity, for if we believe in a God, all mysteries are crowded in that belief, since he must be self-existent, and fill infinitude. Even to think of God abstractedly is not unattended with somewhat of painful emotions: boundless majesty and power, greatness that is incomprehensible, are not subjects in themselves fitted to refresh or soothe the troubled spirit of man. We are, then, only constituted to know and imitate God, as all created beings must be, by the manifestations of himself through his works. In this way does he unfold himself to the gaze of all his intelligent family throughout his illimitable universe.

What know we of the men who were the lights of their age, and who lived only to bless their race, but by their works? We have a far more accurate idea of Milton through his immortal poem than we could have by gazing on his features, or conversing at his feet. The mental character and potency of Newton could never have been known but through his "Principia," nor the profound lore of Bacon but through his volumes. The splendid edifice, "the gorgeous palace," or "the solemn temple," more fully reveals to us the skill and taste of the architect than could be revealed by any other means. We may say, moreover, that we know little of one another, except by acts. By our fruits we must judge and be judged. Philosophically speaking, we do not see one another. The eye is not the man, the voice is not the man; they are but impressions of that thinking principle which dwells mysteriously within us. There it lives and reigns, but impenetrable clouds surround

its throne. Life must give outward manifestations of itself to be known; and when those manifestations have been benevolent and noble, though we may have only heard of them, we have loved and admired. How many are the men who live in our affections, and whom we have only met with in history? The man who, with philanthropic soul, has sacrificed his life to save his country, lives known and loved through successive generations. How oft has an act of disinterested benevolence—no matter in what clime performed—set our affections in glow towards one whom we shall never meet till we meet above? So is it in reference to God, “whom, having not seen, we love.” “He has done great things for us, whereof we are glad.” He is ever doing great things for all his rational creatures in all worlds.

In the natural world, how much of God is seen? The earth is full of his goodness; and his wisdom, conjoined with his benevolence, appears just in the degree that men examine his works. He teaches in every work he has created. The frail flowers are full of Him, as well as the everlasting stars. They all speak of Him, and for Him, “sending up from earth’s great altar their silent praise.” Nature, too, is not a volume which we are idly to read for our mere amusement, nor are her scenes unfolded merely to have awakened grateful sensations and poetical emotions. There are great principles which God would have us learn and act upon. *Consider* the lily. The Creator pencilled its beauty, not for itself, but for *thee*. *Consider* the ravens. An Eye unseen watches them, and a hand unseen feeds them, whilst they, in their work, perform some good for man. He created them as he created all things, on the principle of distribution and benevolence. The quiet landscape, the silent hills, the frowning forest, and the deep-sounding ocean, mirror forth something of Him who created and pervades them all; and he who, amidst them, will earnestly hearken to silent voices, and study the lessons presented, may become a better man.

God, too, has unfolded much of his character, for six thousand years, in the moral government of our world.

Universal history is but an account of the employment or conversion of human agencies to accomplish the high behests of heaven, and give dominion to the principles of immutable and eternal rectitude. The subversion of monarchies, the ashes of once proud empires, and the tumults of nations, are but chapters in the great book of Providence, to be read and pondered by all. All tribes and kindreds of the earth have seen God in his doings. At times he has manifested some of the attributes of his character in awful form; and when his judgments have been abroad in the earth, the people might have learned righteousness. "Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living."

But the brightest and fullest manifestation of God is in Christ; and he who has seen the Son, has seen the Father also. Wondrous truth! God manifest in the flesh? Divinity shining through the man as the central attraction in the kingdom of souls!—as the perfect Model of moral excellence to all intelligent beings! One great end, though not the primary one, in his grand mission to our benighted world, was to unfold his character for universal imitation; and continually, while traversing the plains of Judea, the shores of Galilee, and the streets of Jerusalem, did he utter the command, "*Follow me.*" He hath left us an example that we should follow his footsteps. Christ, then, exhibits to us a character that is imitable. The man Christ Jesus can be imitated. When he stilled the troubled lake, or called up the sheeted dead, by his own omnipotency, we behold attributes of character which belong only to him as God, and we feel no desire to possess the power to perform the same.

But when we behold him confronting the troubled soul, wiping the tear of sorrow away, and directing the care-worn pilgrim of time to trust in the everlasting God, and long to be like him, and by his help we feel we can, he manifests to us the *un-imitable* part of his character, and we contemplate it and adore; he manifests also the imitable part, and we admire, and asked to be transformed into the same.

3. If we are to imitate God, we must possess the requisite faculty, and that faculty man has.

It is a law of our nature to imitate. We unconsciously model from those among whom we live, while they are influenced for good or evil by the character we continually present to them. Our characters in early life are shaped in the home circle. The child is ever imitating. The actions, words, and spirit of the parent are mighty moulding forces, though child and parent may be as unconscious of them as they are of the force which binds them to the solid earth. Even after home is left, how active is this law in youth! A companion neutralizes the good effected by years of parental training, and he who bid fair to be crowned with honour is covered with ignominy and shame. It is, perhaps, only in maturer years that we become less, unconsciously, the imitators of others, but even then we see the potency of this law.

If, then, we look at man as a religious being, and mark his religious developments, we see this law still at work. There are gods, many and diversified, too, in character; but the people are as they, ever bearing the impress of their likeness. The moral characteristics of a people will determine at what shrine they bow the knee, and the god whose favour they propitiate. The temple of Mars must have its worshippers—warriors; and that of Bacchus must resound with the song of its drunken devotees. It is only when the God of the Bible is worshipped and adored that man begins to assume his right position in the world in which he is placed, and to approximate to the moral likeness in which he was originally created. Fellowship with purity begets purity: communion with God, frequent and lengthened, produces in us God-likeness. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

The practical deductions from our subject are obvious, as well as solemnly important. If, in our daily life, we are constantly influencing others, what a stimulating motive

have we to seek the Divine model, and to conform ourselves to it! While this alone can prevent us from living to injure and destroy human souls, it can alone render us mighty as preachers of righteousness. No influence among men, for good or evil, is so potent as *unconscious* influence—the influence of our daily character. Compared with this, the burning eloquence of an Apollos is but as the “sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” Men preach by a look, by intonations of voice, by the utterance of a word. Voiceless sermons are not less powerful because they are voiceless. If there are “sermons in stones, and books in running brooks,” surely there are homilies in the unfoldings of character. In the moral world, as in the physical, quiet forces are the most powerful. The rolling thunder shaking the firm earth, the winged lightning scathing the forest-tree, the electric fluid shivering the sea-bound rock, are feeble agencies compared with the falling dew of darting sunlight. These are mighty forces, for they restore a drooping creation, and fill the world with life, beauty, and joy.

Our subject, too, may, and should, become a powerful test as to our future destiny. It makes the end of Bible doctrines everything; it points us to that for which we believe—character, and not creed, as the ultimatum of our probationary existence. That which makes us God-like bears with it its own credentials that it is Divine; and he who possesses this character has the strongest evidence that he is an heir of heaven. The foundation of his hopes for the future is the Rock which the rude winds and rough waves of life’s ocean can never bear away. God will never cut off from himself the *holy* soul. Heaven—the holy place—draws to itself, as by a moral gravity, all holy souls, and will for ever keep them there. A glorious church will be that on earth when the harsh voice of controversy shall be hushed in the silent and anxious listening to the higher voice from heaven—“Be ye therefore followers of God.”

W. BEALBY.

Germes of Thought.

Analysis of Homily the Fifty-sixth.

“And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision. It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh and his soul is empty; or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite,” &c.—ISA. xxix. 7, 8.

SUBJECT:—*The Visions of Sin.*

THERE are two grand truths of a most stirring import unfolded in the text, as explained below : *—

First. *That wicked men are frequently employed to execute the Divine purpose.* The Almighty determined to humble Jerusalem, and he employed Sennacherib as the engine of his justice. Whilst we are far from intimating that he inspired the Assyrian king with his murderous ire and projects, we are forced to the conviction that he made this wicked man's intentions the means of executing his own eternal plans;

* The word “Ariel” literally means the “Lion of God,” and is here applied to Jerusalem, probably because that, under the reign of David, it was far-famed for its heroic deeds and unconquerable prowess. The first eight verses of this chapter are a prediction of the invasion of Judea by Sennacherib, and of its sudden deliverance. In the first four verses, the invasion is represented as being under the direction of God. “And I will camp against thee,” &c. The idea is, That thou, Jerusalem, which hast prided thyself in thy great power and privilege, shall be greatly humbled and subdued. Thy loud and vaunting tones shall be changed; thou shalt speak in the low and whispering voice of fear and alarm; thou “shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust.” From the fifth to the eighth verses there is a change in the scene. Jerusalem is assured that, although the terrible invasion would take place, the invader, in his attempts, would meet with a sudden and tremendous overthrow. “Thou”—that is, the invader—“shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder and with earthquake,” &c. A reference to the *history* of the case, contained in the 18th and 19th chapters of 2 Kings, and to the 32nd chapter of 2 Chronicles, will show how accurately and fully this was realized.

and this he ever does. "He makes the wrath of man to praise him." What a revelation is this of his absolute command over the fiercest and freest workings of the most depraved and rebellious subjects! All the raging billows of depravity are at his command. He can, at pleasure, either stay their proud waves, or make them bear his purpose on their bosom to their final destination.

The other truth which the context teaches is—

Secondly. *That whilst wicked men execute the Divine purpose, they frustrate their own.* Sennacherib worked out the Divine result, but all his own plans and wishes were like the visions of the famished traveller on the oriental desert, who, hungry, thirsty, and exhausted, lies down and dreams, under the rays of a tropical sun, that he is eating and drinking, but awakes and discovers, to his inexpressible distress, that both his hunger and thirst are but increased. No intelligent being has any *choice* as to whether he shall work out God's plan or not: the greatest sinner and the greatest saint, the purest seraph and the blackest demon, are alike bound to this. But all moral beings have to choose whether they shall work out God's purpose so as to *fulfil* or to *frustrate* their own. Hell works out God's plans, and frustrates its own; heaven works out God's plans, and fulfils its own.

Let us look at the vision before us as illustrating the *visions of sin*:—

I. IT IS A DREAMY VISION. It is "as a dream of a night vision." There are waking visions. The orient creations of poetry, the bright prospects of hope, the appalling apprehensions of fear—these are visions occurring when the reflective powers of the soul are more or less active, and are, therefore, not entirely unsubstantial and vain. But the visions which occur in sleep, when the senses are closed, and the consciousness is torpid, and the reason has resigned for a few moments her sway to the hands of a lawless imagination, are generally without reality. Now, the Scriptures represent the sinner as asleep. But where is the analogy

between the natural sleep of the body and the moral sleep of sin? *Natural sleep is the ordination of God, but moral is not.* The kind Author of our existence appointed that, once in the diurnal revolution of our earthly home, this body should close its senses, and rest its powers. But moral sleep is against the plan of God. *Natural sleep is restorative, but moral is destructive:* the one is a "sweet restorer," the other is a fell destroyer. Howbeit, there is yet an analogy. in both there is the want of *activity*. The inactivity, however, of the moral sleep of the sinner is not the inactivity of the *senses*, nor of the *intellect*, nor of the *imagination*, nor of the *passions*—all these are often exceedingly active in the sinner; but the inactivity of the moral faculty—the CONSCIENCE. In both there is the want of consciousness. Man, in physical sleep, is dead to all outward objects: the bright heavens, the green earth, and all the ten thousand forms of life and loveliness around, are *nil* to him. So with the sinner in his moral slumbers. God—Christ—soul—heaven—hell—all are nothing to him. The sinner being thus asleep, his visions are dreams!

II. IT IS AN APPETITIVE VISION. What is the dream of the man whom the Almighty brings under our notice in the text, who lies down to sleep under the raging desire for food and water? It is that he was eating and drinking. His imagination creates the very things for which his appetite was craving. His imagination was the servant of his strongest appetites. So it is ever with the sinner: the appetite for animal gratifications will create its visions of sensual pleasure: the appetite for worldly wealth will create its visions of fortune; the appetite for power will create its visions of social influence and applause. The sinner's imagination is ever the servant of his strongest appetites, and ever pictures to him in airy but attractive forms the objects he most strongly desires. Every man has his ideal world, reared and furnished by his imagination; having elements and provisions according to the strongest appetites.

within. Bright and beauteous is the ideal world of the "pure in heart."

III. IT IS AN ILLUSORY VISION. The hungry man eateth in his dream; "but he awaketh, and his soul is empty:" the thirsty man drinketh; "but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite." The food and water were a mirage in the visionary desert, dissipated into air as his eye opened. All the ideas of *happiness* entertained by the sinner are mental illusions. There are many theories or notions of happiness practically entertained by men that are as manifestly illusive as the wildest dream. First. Every notion of happiness is delusive that has not to do more with the *soul* than the *senses*. The senses are our instruments, not ourselves—the inlets and outlets of the soul. Through them the outward universe comes flowing into us, and out of them issues the inner and higher world of sympathy and thought. But is the pleasurable titillation experienced in their respective and impartive function the happiness of man? By no means: this is corporeal, not spiritual—that which is common to brutes, not that which is peculiar to man. It is transitory, not permanent. It may co-exist with man-wretchedness. Real happiness springs from within, not from without. No man is happy that is not satisfied *from himself*. Secondly. Every notion of happiness is delusive that has not more to do with the *character* than the *circumstances*. A man's happiness consisteth not in what he *has*, but in what he *is*; not in outward possessions and splendour, but in inward principle and state. It wells up from a generous spirit, a grateful heart, an approving conscience, a soul buoyant with noble hopes and aims. Men have sung in prisons, and sighed in palaces; felt heaven on the flaming stake, and hell on the luxurious couch. Thirdly. Every notion is delusive that has not more to do with the *present* than with the *future*. He that is preparing *intentionally* for happiness is not happy, nor cannot be: the selfish motive renders it impossible.

“He that seeketh his life shall lose it.” Heaven does not come as the reward of earthly merit, but as the perfection of earthly joy. It comes as the bloom and cluster to the young plant—as the noontide to the morning dawn. Heaven is for the man that is now “blessed in his deeds,” and for him only. The present is everything to us, because God is in it, and out of it starts the future. Our all is in the now. Duty and destiny are here. Fourthly. Every notion is delusive that has not more to do with the *absolute* than the *contingent*. The senses soon wear out: age renders them incapable of pleasure, and reduces them to dust. Outward circumstances shift and change as the fantastic clouds before the winds. If we are to survive this mortal state, then manifestly our happiness cannot be in those contingencies. It must be found in the fixed and the absolute: in that *word* which is “settled in heaven;” in that *righteousness* which is “from generation to generation;” in that God who ever liveth, and who changeth not.

All these notions of happiness we proclaim delusive: and are they not the popular notions? Do not the “millions” seek happiness in the senses, rather than in the soul; in circumstances rather than in character; in an imaginative future, rather than in the actual present; in passing contingencies, rather than in the absolute realities? Hence, like the oriental dreamer before us, men, hungering and thirsting for happiness, eat, but the soul is empty; drink, but they are still “faint,” and still their “soul hath appetite.”

IV. IT IS A TRANSITORY VISION. In the text, the supposed dreamer was led to feel the illusion which his wayward imagination had practised upon him. “He *awaketh*, and his soul is empty.” Every moral sleeper must awake either here or hereafter; here by *disciplinary voices*, or hereafter by *retributive thunders*.

My brother, look at the scene before thee: an exhausted traveller on the hot desert, with a craving hunger and a burning thirst, lies down to sleep. Before his imagination

there rolls the refreshing stream, and there is outspread the bread of life. He slakes his thirst in those waters, and allays his hunger with that food. He feels himself in Elysian fields, and bright visions flit before him; but some sound—issuing, perhaps, from the lair of some wild beast, or floating from the orchestra of nature—falls on his ear, and starts him from his slumbers. “He awakes, and his soul has appetite.” The vision hath but given edge to his hunger, and heat to his thirst. He stands up, vexed with his delusions, trembling with his weakness, and burning with his appetites, to pursue his weary way. He sees nothing within his whole horizon to meet his wants; but with the hot sands beneath his feet, the melting beams of the sun upon him, and the air breathing the breath of flame, he moves amidst the elements of destruction. Will this be a picture of thyself, my friend, when thou shalt start up from the dream of life amidst the scorching scenes of retribution?

Analysis of Homily the Fifty-seventh.

“Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.—MATT. xix. 27—30. “For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard,” &c.—MATT. xx. 1—19.

SUBJECT:—*The Reward of Piety.*

WHAT SHALL WE HAVE THEREFORE? This question, thus started by Peter, and eternally echoed by selfish religionists, is the key to the interpretation of the entire passage.*

* The word “for,” with which the 20th chapter begins, plainly shows its connexion with what goes before; nor can the parable given in the first nineteen verses of the 20th chapter be fully understood, unless it be looked at as a reply to Peter’s interrogation.

Although piety, in its highest moods, disdains such a mercenary inquiry as this—is too full of gratitude to think of gain—too absorbed in the delights of present engagements to feel aught of solicitude about future joys; still Jesus deems it proper to reply, and in responding to the inquiry, he propounds certain great truths in relation to its rewards; and to these truths, as here developed, we shall give our present attention.

I. THAT THE REWARD OF PIETY, IN RELATION TO THE APOSTLES, WAS ASSOCIATED WITH MUCH THAT WAS PECULIAR. “Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”* There are two general thoughts contained in this passage which will develop what was *peculiar* to the apostles in the reward of piety:—First. *That they had a special connexion with this great work of spiritual reformation: they followed Christ* “in the regeneration.” They were his *immediate* successors. They caught the world-regenerative words from his lips, and inbreathed the reformation-spirit from his life; they witnessed those wonderful facts of his history on which the

* The word “regeneration” we regard as designed to designate that great spiritual reformation which Christ came into the world to promote amongst men, and which, through his system, has been slowly proceeding ever since, and will continue to progress from age to age until the *moral* “restoration of all things.” The period alluded to, and the expression, “when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory,” seems to us to refer unquestionably to his ascension to heaven, when he became invested with authority; and when, in consequence of his dispensation of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the “regeneration” received an impulse that should gain new force and influence from that moment to the last hour. The promise here made to the disciples to “sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel,” contains a spiritual and Christian idea enrobed in material and Jewish costume. As “the twelve tribes” comprehended the whole of the Jewish people, the expression is here used to designate the whole Christian Church. James, in the first verse of his epistle, uses it in this sense; and the “twelve thrones” evidently mean, that each of the apostles should be invested with a ruling authority in that church.

doctrines of his renovating system are based, and by which they are illustrated and enforced. In the "upper room" at Jerusalem they waited for that Spirit which he promised, and which descended on them, giving them "tongues of fire" to proclaim his truth, and powers of miracle to enforce the same. They first conveyed his glorious message of mercy "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Thus, in a special sense, they "followed" him "in the regeneration." Secondly. *That, in consequence of the special connexion which they had with this great work of spiritual reformation, they were invested with peculiar authority.* "Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones." Each shall have authority amongst "the twelve tribes"—the general church.

Has not this promise been fulfilled? Have not the apostles ever since sat upon moral thrones in the church? Have not their speeches and writings ever been regarded as of unquestionable authority? Have not all the succeeding disciples of Jesus bowed reverentially to their words? Are they not judges in all the tribes of our Israel? They are, indeed, the greatest moral sovereigns, Christ excepted, ever born of men. No sympathies of thought, however venerable with age or radiant with genius; no scheme of government, however advocated by eloquence, or defended by arms; can stand long if they oppose these monarchs of Israel. They fade and melt away before the brightness of apostolic *dicta*. These apostles are enthroned in the hearts of the good; side by side they sit down with Jesus on the throne of redeemed souls. Their empire survives the ruins of time, and will one day encompass the wide world.

This *authority*, then, is an element in the reward of the apostle's piety peculiar to themselves. From the nature of the position they occupied in the system of Jesus, no others will ever participate of this honour. We infer, from this passage—

II. THAT THE REWARD OF PIETY, IN THE CASE OF ALL, IS

INEXPRESSIBLY GREAT. "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Three ideas are here suggested, which will bring out our general proposition:—First. That respect for Christ is essential to the *rewardableness* of human conduct. "For my name's sake," says Christ. The expression, which is of frequent occurrence, indicates, I think, supreme respect for the spirit which he exemplified, the doctrines he taught, and the enterprise he adopted. To respect Christ in this sense is to respect the greatest truths, the most perfect goodness, the highest interests of humanity, and the sublimest manifestations of God; and this is *virtue*, and nothing else. "Whatsoever ye do, therefore," saith the apostle, "in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Secondly. That respect for Christ may frequently involve great sacrifices. At the outset of Christianity, those who identified themselves with it had to forsake "houses," "brethren," "sisters," &c.; and, up to the present moment, it has held true that the full and faithful carrying out of religion involves sacrifices in some form or other. The next truth which this verse contains is, thirdly, that these sacrifices, however great, are infinitely more than compensated. An hundredfold shall be received in this life, and in the future state everlasting life. The advantages of a religious life here are infinitely more than a counterbalance to all the inconveniences that may arise out of it. What inward tranquillity! what uplifting thoughts! what buoyant energy of the soul! what high aspirations! what lofty hopes! what kindling inspirations! How delightful to feel that death is gain, that God is our Father, that the universe is our home, and that eternity is the sphere where we shall develop our powers, realize our desires, and fulfil our aims! But what is all this to the hereafter—EVERLASTING LIFE! Here are ages of enjoyment that no arithmetic can compute; oceans of pleasure, whose majestic billows rise from the depths of infinitude, and break on no shore!

This is the reward of piety for all—not for the apostles only, but for “every one.” We infer, from this passage—

III. THAT THE REWARD OF PIETY IS INVARIABLY OBTAINED IN CONNEXION WITH LABOUR. In the parable, the householder rewarded none “in the evening” who had not been employed some part of the day in the vineyard. Those who continued “all the day idle” received nothing from the householder’s hand at the reckoning hour. *Work* is heaven’s condition of prosperity and enjoyment in everything. Indolence brings ruin to the individual and the state, to the body, intellect, and soul. It fills our workhouses with paupers, our prisons with culprits; it keeps the intellect in the darkness of ignorance and error, and the will in the chain of prejudice and passion; it makes the moral heart of the world, like the “field of the slothful,” all grown over with thorns and nettles, “and the stone wall thereof broken down.” Who, then, will be rewarded in the evening? Not the man whose religion consisted merely in hearing sermons, seeking comfort, talking his beliefs, uttering sentimental sympathies, and offering prayers; but the man who laboured earnestly, faithfully, and devoutly, in the cause of humanity, for Christ’s sake.

I infer from this passage—

IV. THAT THE REWARD OF PIETY IS NOT REGULATED BY THE TIME ON WHICH THE LABOUR WAS ENTERED. Here are persons who commenced their labours at different hours in the day—some who entered even on the last hour—and yet all received the same sum. The common opinion concerning these “hours” is, that they refer to the different periods of *individual life*—childhood, youth, middle life, old age. Against this opinion I have two objections: first, that such an idea does not harmonize with the design of Christ, which was to answer the question of Peter; and, secondly, that such an idea tends to weaken the motive for the present consecration, by holding out an advantage for procrastina-

tion; for if the man who adopts religion in the “eleventh hour”—in old age—will be treated the same as he who has pursued a religious course from the first of his conscious being, what motive is there for youthful consecration? It seems to me to refer not to the different periods of individual life, but to the different periods of *Gospel history*. Our Saviour is answering the question of men who entered the Christian vineyard on the first period of the history of his system—the “third hour”—the dim dawn of the Gospel day; and who seemed to feel that they had a claim to special honours on that account. Jesus reminds them, by his parable, that there was no ground for such a hope; that the people who would enter on the work in any subsequent age, up to the very last hour in the world’s history, would be treated alike. This view not only gives point to Christ’s reply, but a sublime grandeur to his system. His system is not for one generation, nor one age, but for all generations and all ages, up to the last. Century after century, up till the clock of time strikes the last hour, men will be entering into his vineyard; and the man of the last age shall be rewarded as well as the man of the first. Thus the old proverb shall receive another illustration:—“The last shall be first, and the first last.”

V. THAT THE REWARD OF PIETY IS EVER ADMINISTERED ON PRINCIPLES OF UNDENIABLE FAIRNESS. Some of those labourers in the parable who had entered the vineyard first, on receiving the same pay as those who had entered last, “murmured against the goodman of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour,” &c.*

The murmuring affords an opportunity of showing how fair the principles are on which he bestows rewards. First. It always agrees with the understanding of the labourer when he commenced his work. “Didst thou not agree

* This murmuring of the labourers is a mere stroke on the background of the picture, to show off to greater effect the main subject. All parables have such strokes.

with me for a penny?" What is the promise that Christ makes to a man on his entering his system! SALVATION. This is, indeed, all that Christ *directly* bestows. All the *peculiarities* of glory spring out of diversity of talent, position, &c. The labourer thinks of nothing more than SALVATION at the time. To have this is his highest aim; and this "penny," this reward, every true labourer shall have. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Secondly, it always agrees with the manifest principles of justice." "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" "Indeed, in Christ's labour, there is no right to a reward; the very word is an accommodation. Who gave the *strength* to labour, the *time* to labour, the *disposition* to labour? Christ. Whatever blessing, therefore, comes as the result, is a sovereign gift, rather than a righteous allotment. Where, then, is the ground for murmuring? "Is thine eye evil, because I am good?"—"Art thou envious, because I am so generous to all?"

VI. THAT THE REWARD OF PIETY WILL BE EXTENSIVELY ENJOYED. "For many be called, but few chosen." Three different ideas have been attached to this expression. The first is, that whilst God calls many by the Gospel, he has only chosen a few to be saved; the second, that the chosen refers to the Jews, and the called to the Gentiles; and the third, that the chosen refers to the few apostles selected as his first heralds, and the many to those who, by his Gospel, shall be brought into his kingdom. The first is a God-dishonouring idea, entertained by a class which, under the increasing light of intelligence, is dwindling fast. The second is an idea which is, unquestionably, true, but not, we think, the truth intended to be taught. Christ is answering a question put by his disciples, who were, in an especial sense, his *chosen* ones; and what he means, I presume, is, You, my disciples, are but very few compared with the many that are to be called to the high privileges of my kingdom.

Analysis of Homily the Fifty-eighth.

"Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth," &c.—MATT. xiii. 3—8.

SUBJECT:—*God's Word and Man's Soul.*

THERE are four great general truths which this parable brings up to our minds, and which introduce us to a good view of the classes of Gospel hearers here brought under our notice. First. *That there is a constitutional affinity subsisting between man's soul and God's word.* The soil is made to receive, germinate, and unfold the seed; and the seed, in its turn, to clothe its surface with loveliness, and enrich it with fruit. The parable implies a similar connexion between the word of God and the human soul. The most glorious fact in our nature is, that we have a capacity to receive and develop a word from the INFINITE. Secondly. *That, notwithstanding this affinity, they are often found existing in a state of separation from each other.* In the scene before us, you have the field ploughed and harrowed, but no seed in it: the seed is in the sower's basket, until he throws it out. It is so in relation to the word of God and the soul. There are millions of cases where they exist apart; and these minds, like the untilled acres of unpeopled lands, are "a wilderness and a waste." Thirdly. *That there is an agency in operation to bring the two into a right connexion.* The sower has gone forth to put the seed into the soil. This represents an agency employed to bring God's word into contact with souls. What is that agency? who is the spiritual sower? Our answer is, The Christian teacher. The old prophets, Christ, the apostles, ministers, and all who, in every age, of whatever sect, from Christian motives—by writing, preaching, or conversation—disseminate Gospel truths, are represented by this "sower." Thank God, there is an agency at work in this world to bring truth and soul together—to lodge the seminal germs of Christianity

in human hearts. Whilst we deplore its present feebleness and manifest inadequacy, we anticipate the day when it shall tread every field of every island and continent of the globe, and scatter the "incorruptible seed" over all the zones of human life. Fourthly. *That the connexion which the agency forms between God's word and human souls is of various kinds.* There are four kinds of connexion brought before us in this parable.

I. THE CONNEXION OF THE UNTHINKING LISTENER.

"Some fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up." In many of the cultivated fields of Judea there were pathways left for travellers: through them the plough-share was not driven, and the glebe remained too hard to receive the seed. The seed from the hand of the sower fell on it, rested there for a little while, and that was all. It was soon crushed by the foot of the traveller, or borne away by the fowls of heaven. What class of soul, brought into contact with the Gospel, does this "way side" represent? The UNTHINKING. Jesus explains this in the 19th verse:—"When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart." *He understandeth it not.* This is the cause of its being left on the hard surface until "the wicked one" "catcheth" it away. Men hear, but do not *think*: the word vibrates for a moment on the ear, and then dies away. It falls on the senses, but, for the want of reflection, it does not sink into the soul. In the nature of the case, the Gospel can take no effect upon the soul without *thought*. Thought is necessary, both to break up the hard glebe of our nature, and to take the precious seed as it falls upon the outer senses into the soul, where, amidst the prolific soil of moral feeling, it may lie beyond the reach of the "fowls," and there germinate and grow. There is—

II. THE CONNEXION OF THE SENTIMENTALLY INTERESTED.

“Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth : and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth : and when the sun was up they were scorched ; and because they had no root, they withered away.”* This connexion is marked by four things :—First. *Superficiality*. The word hath not “root in himself,” but merely in his emotions. It has not been digested by the intellect, and then deposited in the soul and conscience. It merely floats on the surface—does not sink into the rich mould beneath. Secondly. *Precocity*. The seeds that fell into this ground soon made their appearance : “forthwith they spring up.” The mere sentimental effects of the Gospel are very rapid in their development. Thirdly. *Joyousness*. “Anon with joy receiveth it.” Full of rapture for a time : all hymns and music. Fourthly. *Transitoriness*. “And when the sun was up,” &c. How accurately these things characterize all mere *sentimental* hearers !

III. THE CONNEXION OF THE SOUL-DIVIDED. “Some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprung up, and choked them.” Not amongst thorns full grown, but where they were in germs ; for in Luke it is said, “they sprang up with it.” They grew up together, but the thorns overtopped the seeds, shut them out from the air and light, extracted the moisture and nutriment from the earth which they required for their nourishment, and thus they pined away in the shade. The *soil* here seems to have been good ; it is neither represented as hardened or superficial. No fault is found with it. This represents, therefore, those in whose *moral* natures the word

* “A soil mingled with stones is not meant, for these, however numerous or large, would not certainly hinder the roots from striking deeply downward, as those roots, with the instinct which they possess, would feel and find their way, penetrating between the interstices of the stones, and would so reach the moisture below ; but what is meant is ground where a thin superficial coating of mould covered the surface of a rock which stretched below it, and presented an impassable barrier, rendering it wholly impossible that the roots should penetrate beyond a certain depth, or draw up any supplies of nourishment from beneath.”—*Trench*.

goes; those whose consciences are awakened, and partially developed by it; those who understand something of its *rationale*, and feel something of its moral grandeur and power. But Christianity has not an entire possession of their souls: there are other things interesting it—other germs growing in the soil, which injure the seed of the kingdoms and prevent it from producing fruit. “The care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.”

There is yet—

IV. THE CONNEXION OF THE TRUE-HEARTED. “Other fell into good ground,” &c. In Luke, we are told that the good ground are those who “in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.” These are men who allow it to possess their entire souls: it fills them, and they produce fruit according to their opportunities and capacities. “Some an hundredfold,” &c.

Which of these connexions sustainest thou to the great soul-saving word? Is it the *unthinking* one? Then, thy nature is a “way side,” exposed to the hardening tread of every moral footpad; and the winged ones of the air will bear away every germ of truth and goodness that heaven’s sowers are scattering over the field of the world. Or is it the *sentimentally* interested? Does the word find but a lodgment in thy feelings? Has it no grand form of rational thought—no breath of soul-inspiration—no controlling principle of moral life? Is it nought but a thing of sigh, and song, and unctuous talk? Then it has no root. The blade and bud will soon be scorched by the sun. Or is it *that of the divided soul*? Has it taken root in thy understanding and heart in connexion with germs of worldliness? Does it but share thy nature? Are there other antagonistic principles growing with it in the soil? Then it will one day be choked, and thy nature will be like the field of the slothful, covered over with nettles and thorns. Or is it the connexion

of the true-hearted. Then it shall flourish and grow, and produce abundant fruit. It shall cover thy inner and spiritual world with the loveliness of Eden once more, and cover again the tree of knowledge and tree of life with rich and eternal fruit.

Analysis of *Homily the Fifty-ninth.*

“And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan.”—DEUT. xxxiv. 1—7.

SUBJECT:—*Pisgah; or, a Picture of a Life.*

OF all the world's great men Moses is the greatest. He is the historian of the creation: his pen detailed the remodeling of this planet as a suitable habitation for man, the origin of the race, and the stirring and extraordinary events that transpired in the first stages of human history. He was the legislator, not of a district or a class, but of the world. His code embodied principles on which all governments should be based, to which all men are amenable, and by which all are to be judged at last. He was the conqueror of Egypt's proud monarch: he broke the iron rod of the oppressor, freed his race from a crushing and ignominious thralldom, and became the founder of the most glorious commonwealth that ever appeared on the stage of time. He was an eminent type of the Son of God; and, ages after his departure from the world, he appeared with Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration, and talked with Christ about the death that he should accomplish at Jerusalem. From no man did there ever issue such a deep and ever-swelling stream of influence as from Moses. His name figures in all literature, floats in the traditions of heathens, is a household word in all Christendom, is dear to all the good on earth, and mingles with the songs of heaven.

We are brought by this narrative to the last hours of this great man's earthly life. He delivers, in the plains of

Moab, his valedictory address to the assembled tribes. Connexion with them being now dissolved for ever, he wends his lonely way up the mountains of Nebo, from whose majestic heights he was to survey the goodly land, and then "lie down to die." When he had reached the point which commanded the best view of the promised land called Pisgah, the Lord appeared to him, and "showed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphthali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar. And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither."

There are several ways in which we may usefully look at this interesting incident. We may take it to illustrate *God's method of correcting sin*. If we look at it in this aspect, we should have, at least, two of God's ways of correcting evil suggested to us. First. Revealing to the sinner what he has lost by his sin. The view which was now given to Moses of the promised land would unquestionably impress him—according, probably, to its design—with what he had lost by his transgression at Meribah. By the *Bible*, and *providence*, God is ever revealing to sinful men what they lose by sin. There are but few days, perhaps, in the life of any man, on which he is not brought to some Pisgah, where he commands a view of blessings that might have been his had he not sinned. Secondly. Concealing from the sinner what he would turn to sin did he know it. The conduct of the Jews, in relation to the brazen serpent, shows that they had a strong tendency to idolize what had been blessings to them. Had they known of the grave of their greatest benefactor, the probability is that they would have treated it as superstitious Christians have done the "holy sepulchre" in more modern times. Hence the Lord buried him, so that no man knoweth of his sepulchre to this day.

Revealing some things, and *concealing* others, is God's method of correcting evil in this world. There are many things about the powers of nature, and the thoughts and purposes of our fellow-men, and the modes of acting on human souls, which, if known by wicked men, would be turned to bad account; but God conceals such things. So long as men are wicked, it is necessary that Providence should keep them in ignorance of many things.

But there is another use which we might make of this interesting incident; we might use it to illustrate *the Church's prospects of posterity*. Moses saw now the beautiful scenes in which his posterity, in after ages, would live and develop the glorious principles which he had communicated to them from God. From the Pisgah of prophecy, the church of the present day can descry the millennial glories that await the future generations. Or yet, once more, we might use it to illustrate the *last privileges of the good*. Here is a *glorious vision in death*. As the earthly Canaan was now brought under the bodily eye of Moses, the heavenly is often unfolded to the spiritual eye of the Christian in death. How enrapturing are the prospects which are often outspread to the vision of the good man in the last hour! Here is *Divine fellowship*: God was with Moses. So with the good man in death. "Yea, though I walk through the valley," &c.

But we intend using this incident for another, and perhaps a more practical, purpose, as a *picture of life*. Here we have—

I. **LIFE ENDING IN THE MIDST OF LABOUR.** When, from Pisgah's heights, the promised land lay outstretched before the eye of Moses, he must have felt that his work was far from completed. The tribes were to be conducted over the rolling Jordan; Jericho, with its massive defences, was to be taken; the aborigines were to be exterminated; the land divided amongst the tribes; and the theocracy fully organized. But he must die. Ah! thus it is ever with us. Men,

for the most part, die in the midst of their labour ; but few, if any, in the last hour, feel that they have finished their work—done all they *might* have done, ought to have done, or purposed doing. The farmer leaves his field half ploughed ; the artist dies with unformed figures on the canvas ; the tradesman is cut down in the midst of his merchandise ; the statesman is arrested with great political measures on his hand ; and ministers depart with many schemes of instructive thought and plans of spiritual usefulness undeveloped. If men die thus in the midst of labour we infer—(1) *That there should be cautiousness as to the work pursued.* There are trades, professions, and departments of secular action, that are very lucrative, but unrighteous. It is a sad thing to die in the midst of unholy labour. (2) Earnestness in the prosecution of their calling. Our time is short : therefore, “ whatsoever our hands find to do,” &c. (3) Attention to the moral influence of their labour, both on themselves and others. We should make our daily labour a means of grace ; every secular act should *express* and *strengthen* those moral principles over which death has no power. All labour should have but one spirit ; and that spirit the spirit of goodness—the life and happiness of the soul. Let there be one spirit, one great thought in all our labour, and then it will be everlastingly profitable to us. “ For the deep, divine thought demolishes centuries and millenniums, and makes itself present through all ages.”

II. HERE IS LIFE ENDING IN THE MIDST OF EARTHLY PROSPECTS. The promised land—which had often passed before the imagination of Moses, buoying up his spirit amidst the trials and vexations of the wilderness—now expanded in all the charms of reality before him ; but into those lovely scenes he was not to enter. He should not tread those hills, or walk those flowery meads. The imagination spreads out to most mortals bright prospects of worldly good ; presents a sphere of “ good things to come ;” for “ man never *is*, but always *to be* blest.” This is especially the case with youth.

How bright and glowing is their "promised land" of vision! Most die on some Pisgah, in the midst of prospects of earthly good they will never realize. If men die amidst prospects of good they never realize, then (1) human aspirations after the earthly should be moderated; and then (2) human aspirations after the spiritual should be supreme.

III. HERE IS LIFE ENDING IN THE MIDST OF PHYSICAL STRENGTH. "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." There was yet a manly strength in his limb, and a brightness in his eye. How large a proportion of the human family die in this state! "One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease, and quiet." "His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow." Death at any time is painful;—painful when the physical machinery has worn itself out; when the senses are deadened, the limbs palsied, and the current of life flows coldly and tardily in the veins. But far more painful is it when it comes in the midst of manly vigour and a strong zest for a prolonged existence.

Does not this view of life—ending in the midst of important labour, bright earthly prospects, and manly strength—predict a higher state of being for humanity beyond the confines of the grave? Yes! we shall live again, to work out all our plans, and new ones form to be worked out anon; to enter every "promised land" of hope—

Enjoy their ambrosial fruit,
And the sweet fragrance of their soul-inspiring air,
And die not till our deathless powers shall fade and faint.

Analysis of Homily the Sixtieth.

"But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?"—JOB xix. 28.

JOB was a very remarkable man. In character and in circumstances he was a man of note. At one time he lived in the sunshine of prosperity; after that he passed under the eclipse of adversity. He suffered much, as his name

indicates. When we meet him first on the field of history, we find him exceedingly prosperous and respected; after this we look at him, and find his prosperity turned to adversity—his honour to contempt.

He was, nevertheless, a good man: he could appeal to his Maker, and say, “Thou knowest that I am *not* wicked;” and the Divine testimony proves that he was correct in his estimate of his own character. God pronounced him a “perfect and an upright” man. In all his sorrows he “retained his integrity,” and cried, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.” “Though he should slay me, yet will I trust in him.” And here, after replying to Bildad, he exclaims, in this remarkable language, “Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! for I know that my Redeemer liveth.” “In my flesh shall I see God,” &c. “But ye should say, Why persecute we him, *seeing the root of the matter is found in me?*”

SUBJECT:—*True Religion.*

Some critics read the passage: “But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?”—*i.e.*, What root of strife? what ground of discussion? Others render it thus: “How did we persecute, when the root of the matter was found in him!”—Why persecute we this poor man any longer, since we find, by looking into the root of this controversy, that he is innocent of the things whereof we have accused him? There is another rendering, which is as follows:—“Why do we persecute him? the *substance of virtue* is found in him.” We adopt this reading, regarding it the most natural.

The “root of the matter” we refer, therefore, to Job’s *goodness*—his *religion*—which is called a “*good thing*” in God’s book.

I. RELIGION IS A REALITY. The word rendered *matter* means a *word*, a *thing*, a *subject*; here the subject in dispute,

which we take to be Job's *religion*. The term religion is sometimes employed to denote the *whole system of revealed truth*. Thus, when we say the religion of the Bible, the religion of Jesus, we mean the entire system of truth. At other times, religion means the *influence of truth on the heart*. Then we call it the religion of the Christian. In this latter sense, it is the *life of God in the soul*—the Divine nature communicated to man—"Christ in us"—the hope of glory.

Many views are entertained in regard to the nature of true religion, its sphere, and its principles. Some view it as a *life*—the divine life of man; some as *knowledge*, some as *feelings*, some as a sense of *dependence*; whilst others view it as a course of conduct. Religion may be truly regarded as a *life*—a life deriving its support from God—a life of *dependence* upon him. The representations given of it favour this idea. By what is it characterized? By *growth, activity, feeling, hunger, thirst*, &c. Religion is the highest kind of life—a life of *relation* to God, of *communion* with Jesus. Indeed, it is the only *real* life. The wicked man does not live. He *breathes, moves, walks, and eats*, but does not live. Properly speaking, "*he is not.*" But the good man lives; he answers the great end of being; he depends upon God as the child depends on its parent. Religion may be therefore regarded as the *life divine* in man: hence, when he becomes religious, he is "*a new creature*"—"born again"—"*regenerated*," &c.

II. RELIGION IS A REALITY IN THE SOUL,—in the *heart*. This is its centre and its home. The heart is the soil in which the spiritual seed must be sown, or it will never vegetate; religious principles must be implanted *here* in "the spring of life," or they could never live. Religion is, essentially, a "matter of the heart;" it has to do with the feelings and the emotions. The heart is the fountain of love—the great spring whenever the streams of affection flow. "Out of it are the issues of life." Religion must go farther than the *head*, the *intellect*, and the *judgment*; it must

lodge itself in the "inner man," or it will be *dry, formal, unfruitful, dead*. It is something more than a dry formalism, cold assent, and barren orthodoxy; it is an active principle, a spirit, and a life.

In order to be truly religious, it is necessary, indeed, that the *mind* should be enlightened and the intellect expanded. But it is possible for a man to possess much religious *knowledge*—to be well acquainted with religious creeds, and theological dogmas, and still possess a *hard, unfruitful* heart. Pity does not consist in mere *profession, morality, sacramental* efficiency or orthodoxy, as some suppose. No; it is something infinitely superior to all this: it consists in a *right state of heart*. "The kingdom of heaven," says Christ, "is *within* you," and the "root of the matter" was found in the good old patriarch.

III. RELIGION IS A VITAL REALITY IN THE SOUL—"root." By this we understand religious *principles*—the *germs* of religious character. Some read the expression thus: "The *substance* of piety," &c.—the *sum*, the *essence*, or *principle* of goodness. The root is used to denote the basis of anything—that by which any object is sustained: "the figure is taken from the *germ* or *root* of a tree—the seed or living principle of a plant." We take it to mean, therefore, the *elements* of truth—the *principles* of religion. Those principles are the *seed*, the *springs*, of religious character. The tree with rotten roots soon *wITHERS* and *FALLS* before the storm. So we may say with regard to man: if destitute of religious principles, he cannot stand in the day of tempest. "When persecution or tribulation, because of the word, comes, by-and-by he is offended," and the reason is, "because he has no *root* in himself;" but the man who acts from principle, who is *grounded* and *rooted* in truth, will bear any test of character. Persecution, temptation, sorrow; all these confirm his faith and strengthen his hope. In every storm he strikes his root deeper and deeper into the soil of everlasting truth.

Every building has its foundation, every language has its

alphabet, every tree has its roots. So also every religion has its principles—its elementary truths—and every man ought to possess fixed, decided, religious principles. This is essential to healthy activity—to progress in the divine life.

IV. RELIGION IS A VITAL REALITY IN THE SOUL, EVER DISCERNIBLE. It is "*found*" in man. It cannot be *concealed* for any length of time: the goodness of the heart is soon *seen* in the life. The passage has been rendered thus: "The root of the matter is *disclosed* in me." It is "*found*" *first by God*, the searcher of the heart; he can see it when no one else can. This was a source of consolation to Job at this time: he felt that this goodness was in him, and he knew that his Maker saw it, when his fellow-men regarded him as an hypocrite. "The Lord *knoweth* them that are his;" he "understandeth our thoughts *afar off*." "All things are *naked* and *open* to the eye of him with whom we have to do." *It is found, or discovered, too, by the man himself*. He cannot remain ignorant of it long; he must know his own character. He knows what he *loves*, what he *hates*. *It is "found" also by his fellows*. A man is known by his conduct as "the tree is known by its fruit." He cannot be known *in any other way* by his associates. Where religion exists in the heart, it will manifest itself in the life and conversation. It is not a "candle under a bushel, but on a candlestick." It "shines before men:" it enlightens the family, the town, the country, and the world. The *seed* is not for ever covered by the soil. It appears, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." The *leaven* influences the "whole lump;" the *well of water* bursts forth through the ground, and will, by-and-by, find the ocean; the *light* "shineth more and more till the perfect day." The "root of the matter" also is *disclosed* and made manifest.

Every principle, good or evil, develops itself. It is progressive in its character. Principles are developed by circumstances—adverse as well as favourable. Nothing tends more to develop religious principles than sufferings. The truth is

exemplified in the case of Job. The furnace of affliction purified and refined his moral character : after being tried, “he came forth like gold.” He was “made perfect through sufferings.” Joseph, David, Daniel, and the three Hebrew young men are other scriptural instances. Difficulties are essential to greatness of character, and he is but a poor soul who cannot brave them. *Sufferings* strengthen all *true principles*. The storm fans the spark into a conflagration. Rains and winds strengthen the fibres of the tree. So to the *good*, “*all things work together for good*”—the cloud as well as the sunshine, the frown as well as the smile. Let us pray for that religion that will bear the test of suffering—sorrow and death.

Reader, bring the subject home to your own heart. Can you say, truly, “The root of the matter is found in *ME*”? If you have not the “root of the matter,” you have *another* root in you—“the root of bitterness”—the root of sin—which will, ere long, spring up a deadly plant to poison your whole being. Pray for the “root of the matter,” that you may grow up as “plants of the Lord”—“trees of righteousness”—which will be transplanted at last in the paradise of God.

Middlesborough.

HENRY P. BOWEN.

Analysis of Homily the Sixty-first.

“But we have the mind of Christ.”—1 COR. ii. 16.

SUBJECT:—*The Mind of Christ.*

MIND here we regard as meaning, not the disposition, but the thinking, conscious agent—literally, *mind*. There are two senses in which we may be said to have the mind of Christ—REPRESENTATIVELY and PERSONALLY.

There are three ways in which the minds of the great men of past ages come down to, and represent themselves, to us : through *the character of their disciples, literary records, and their historic influence*. First. *True disciples* ever reflect

the mind of their teacher. Thus, the conduct of the docile and affectionate child represents the spirit of its departed father; and thus the philosophic schools of antiquity represented for ages the mind of their founders. Jesus had his school. He put his few disciples in possession of his mind,—both its *great ideas* and *governing sympathies* he left the world. They faithfully represented his mind to others. They died; but their followers, in their turn, transmitted the *mind* which they received; and thus on to the present moment. We look at the *true* church, and we can see in it the mind of Christ. Thus over the long line of eighteen centuries, his mind has come down to us through the souls of his devoted followers. Secondly. The minds of great men come down to us from remotest antiquity, through *literature*. A man's *book* is a kind of second incarnation of himself—a body which he makes for himself in which to travel this earth, ages after his fleshy tabernacle has crumbled to dust: it is a kind of ark, in which the mind of its author comes floating down over the flood of centuries. Men of oldest times are still working here in their books. Homer sings to us now, the voice of Demosthenes still fulminates in our ear, and the thoughtful Socrates is interesting the thinkers of this age with his sage and suggestive talk. Thus the mind of Jesus has come down to us. Though he wrote, perhaps, no book of his own, he had sympathetic and infallible amanuenses—men who recorded his thoughts and deeds, his sufferings and sayings. The New Testament is full of the Saviour's mind: there it glows and coruscates. It pulsates as the vital current through every part. And then, thirdly, the minds of great men come down to us in their *historic influence*. In reading the history of mankind, the names of persons come under our notice who create epochs, and leave their footmarks upon the destinies of many generations. Such persons, though they might never have had a disciple or wrote a book, still have their minds reflected in the institutions and genius of nations. Christ's mind has come down to us in

this way. His existence in this world, eighteen centuries ago, is the great *interpretative canon* of history : it explains the mental proclivities, the refined sympathies, the moral honesties, the social benevolences, the civil liberties, and the true religiousness of the civilized world. The *undeniable* and ever-increasing influence of the despised Galilean upon the general thinkings, customs, and institutions of mankind, through all subsequent times, is an historical phenomenon without any parallel, and admits of no explanation on the common laws of human influence.

But we have not only “the mind” of Christ representatively, but *personally*. Whether the minds of departed men are *personally* present with us, is a question belonging exclusively to the speculative realm of thought. They may or may not be : it does not become us to dogmatize, for we have no data to guide us in the inquiry. The case is different in relation to the mind of Christ : he has distinctly assured us that *he*—not his mere influence, but *himself* ; not by mere representation, but in person—is with his church always, even unto the end ;—with it to enlighten, sanctify, guard, and strengthen it. This fact gives the Bible a wonderful advantage over other books. I take up the work of a departed author, and I find many things which I cannot understand, but I have no help ; he has long since departed this life. I have no reason to believe that his *personal* mind is present with me, that he knows the perplexities of my mind concerning his thoughts, or that he either would or could assist me to comprehend his meaning. But when I take up the Bible—though it has been written for centuries—its Author is by my side ; he knows every thought it awakens ; and he not only can, but does, help every earnest inquirer.

We shall now proceed to draw and illustrate two general inferences from this wonderful fact. If we have the mind of Christ, then—

I. WHETHER WE RIGHTLY ACT IN RELATION TO THAT MIND OR NOT, OUR OBLIGATION IS IMMENSE. Our obliga-

tion is ever regulated according to the powers and privileges with which Heaven has endowed us ; it is a principle in the Divine government, which commends itself at once to our sense of moral propriety and justice, that unto whomsoever much is given, of them much will be required. In connexion with this principle, think of two facts :—First. *That the most precious thing in the universe is mind.* Matter, in all its forms of life and beauty, is but the creature, symbol, and servant of mind. One human soul, though tabernacling in poverty, is of more essential worth than the sun which blesses worlds with his bright and life-giving beams. The sun has no susceptibility of feeling, no capacity of thought, no power of volition : it can neither form an idea of itself, nor of its Author ; it can neither alter its course, nor pause a moment in its career. But the feeblest moral mind has all this, and can do all this : it can *feel* the influences that breathe around it ; it can think upon itself, and upon the eternal Author of its being ; it can change its purpose, and alter its course ; it can say *yes* or *no* to the behests of the Almighty. It is an original fountain of thought and action, whose influence will work, when suns, perhaps, have grown dim with age, and stars have crumbled to dust. And then think, secondly, *that the most precious mind in the universe is the mind of Christ.* All human minds are not of the same relative value. The minds of such men as Newton, Bacon, and Milton are worth the aggregate mind of their age. Each, it may be, will exert a greater influence upon the creation than the combined minds of their generation. Hence the folly and injustice of determining a man's usefulness by the number of minds he influences. He who is instrumental in restoring one soul to moral truth and God may do a greater work for the universe than he who corrects a hundred inferior minds. That one soul may be a Luther, that shall create reformatations ; or a Williams, that shall change the destinies of islands ; or a Whitfield, that shall resuscitate the religious spirit of a whole country ; or an Edwards, a Butler, or a Foster, that shall speak to the highest intellects

of all coming times. But the most majestic intellects and brilliant geniuses bear no comparison with the MIND of Christ: his mind was "the image of the invisible God."

What, then, must be the responsibility of the men who have been brought into contact with this mind? Nothing enhances our responsibility so much as connexion with minds of a high and holy order. Pupils of such teachers, hearers of such ministers, and children of such parents, have an amount of accountability unknown to those who are trained under those of an inferior grade. But contact with the mind of Christ enhances our responsibility a thousandfold. "If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sins." "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world," &c. The fact that Christ's mind is in our world is the most stupendous fact in its history: it adds mountains to its obligations, and must exert the most tremendous influence upon its destinies.

Again, we "have the mind of Christ." Then—

II. IF WE ACT RIGHTLY IN RELATION TO THAT MIND, THE EFFECTS ON OUR CHARACTER WILL BE MOST GLORIOUS. There are three great blessings which will ever result from a right connexion with Christ's mind:—First. MENTAL VIVACITY. It is a fixed law of that providence under which we live that *mind is the quickener and developer of mind*. God raises, educates, and saves mind by mind. Hence it is notorious that in rural districts, where the mind is more in contact with sod and soil, with trees and brutes, than with intellect and earnest mind, there is the obvious lack of that mental vivacity and vigour which are found in those populous and mercantile neighbourhoods where there is a perpetual friction and interchange of soul; where minds are constantly flowing and re-flowing into each other. The amount of vital energy and impulse, however, which one mind is capable of imparting to another will, perhaps, generally depend upon two conditions:—First. The character of the *subjects* of intercourse. Where the themes of converse are tame common-places or vague abstractions, but a small amount of

impulse will be imparted; but where they are of an opposite character, a powerful effect may be expected. Secondly. The native vigour of the mind that presents these subjects. Tame subjects presented by a tame soul will be powerless, nor will the most moving subjects produce much effect when presented by a lifeless mind; but where there is great native energy in the soul of the communication, in any case, there must be a powerful effect. Indeed, we cannot realize ourselves in the presence of a great soul, and engage in any lengthened discourse with it, without feeling something like an electric energy pass from it to us, giving a stir and stimulus to all our faculties of thought. Such a mind will invest even common places with thrilling interest. Now, you have just these two conditions in the highest form in connexion with the mind of Christ. Where are themes, in your sublimest sciences or boldest speculations, in your profoundest prose or loftiest poetry, that can bear comparison with those stupendous and soul-stirring subjects which Jesus brings under the attention of mankind? and where are there mental life and genius like his? His mind is *life* and *light*—condensed energy and focal flame. His mind broke the mental slumbers of humanity, put the world in action, and gave it an impulse that shall go on accumulating for ever. He, therefore, who is rightly connected with the mind of Christ must be a man of mental earnestness. A sleepy-minded Christian is a solecism—a contradiction.

The second blessing which will result from a right connexion with the mind of Christ is MORAL ASSIMILATION. No mental law is more regular and observable than that which transforms us into the spirit and character of the mind whom we most love, and with whom we most associate. “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise.” Fellowship with a pre-eminently *spiritual, holy, humble, benevolent, and devout* mind, is eternally incompatible with *worldliness, impurity, pride, selfishness, and impiety*. And the third blessing which will result from a right connexion with the mind of Christ is TRUE HAPPINESS. Christ’s mind does two things towards

human happiness:—First. It removes all the obstructions to spiritual happiness. *Sin* is the great obstruction, and the great work of Christ is “to put away sin;” to put it away in its threefold form. Its *idea form*—the intellectual errors of men are sources of misery; its *disposition form*—the wrong and conflicting dispositions of men are sources of misery; and its *guilt form*—the sense of guilt upon the conscience is a sore element of distress. Christ’s mind puts away these sources of misery. And then, secondly, it supplies the necessary condition of happiness. What is the necessary condition to spiritual happiness? *A suitable object of supreme love.* Our supreme affection is the fountain of our happiness; but for the supreme affection to yield perfect happiness; it must be *free from all moral defects capable of helping us in all the contingencies of our being, ever reciprocating our affections, and one which will continue with us for ever.* In Christ we have all this, and *nowhere else.* If, then, we are in right connexion with the mind of Christ, we are happy. Melancholy and gloom are foreign to Christianity.

Is thy mind in a right connexion with the mind of Christ, my brother? If so, thy intellect does not sleep, nor does it lounge its time away, not play the drone, in the great field of being; but, urged by a Divine impulse, its eye is open, earnestly fixed on the universe, and life appears a sublime solemnity—nay, it is ever on the wing of search, cleaving the intercepting clouds, and struggling its way upward into higher light. Thy character, too, is gradually moulding itself after the loftiest forms of moral perfection—getting more refined, elevated, and Christ-like, in its sympathies and aims. And thou art happy also: sin, the source of misery, is giving way in all its forms, and the *right love*, the true well of bliss, has been unsealed within thee, and it will spring up into everlasting life. Seek to bring that mind, my friend, to bear upon the mind of the world. This is the great want of the world; no other power can save it. Then, circulate its thoughts, breathe its spirit, incarnate its heavenly principles. Let it be manifested in thy mortal body.

The Genius of the Gospel.

[Able expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are happily not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remark, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.]

EIGHTH SECTION.—Matt. v. 1—12.

The Beatitudes; or, the Elements of Well-being.

It is obvious, both from this passage and the preceding one, that the biographers of Jesus have given us but brief specimens of the wonderful things he did and said. We have but the outlines of his history, the texts of his sermons. Thanks to a merciful Providence for gathering up these precious fragments, and, from distant lands and remote centuries, conveying them safely into our hands this day. Jesus is now surrounded by “multitudes,” who had followed him from the different parts of Galilee through which he had passed; for it would seem that, at every stage he reached, his audience increased in numbers, like rivers by the inflowing of new streams. His *popularity* is full of significance. Although the fame of public teachers does not always reflect honour on themselves—proves, in too many cases, the *thoughtlessness* of their followers, rather than the superior power of their minds, greatness of their characters, or accuracy of their doctrines—still, in the case of Jesus, it illustrates the superiority of his *spiritual* power. There is no other way to account for it. He was known as the carpenter’s Son. He was the despised Nazarene, without friend or home; scowled at by the authorities of the country; and the doctrines he taught, too, clashed with all the prejudices of the men he addressed—men who were characterized by a blind and violent attachment

to old dogmas and customs. His low pedigree, his known poverty, his humble appearance, his fearless honesty, and his doctrines, striking directly and obviously against the public sentiment of his times, leave the phenomenon of his popularity to be explained only on the ground of his transcendent spiritual force.

“Seeing the multitudes” which now surrounded him, “he went up into a mountain,”* and there—with the vast assemblage and his chosen disciples—he sat down, “and opened his mouth;” there, on the open mountain, in the great amphitheatre of nature, he opened his mouth to teach. The expansiveness of the natural scenery around accorded with, and helped to express, the illimitable love which he breathed, and the universal truths which he taught: neither the light that gladdened the scene, nor the breezes that swept over the mountain, were more free than the sentiments and spirit of his teaching; indeed, he made the natural objects which were spread about him—the “lily of the field,” the “birds of the air,” the “city upon the hill,” the “house upon the rock”—symbols to express his ideas. He made nature a mirror to reflect his mind. “He opened his mouth.” This was the dawn of a new era in the mental history of the world: it was as the rising of a new sun upon the spiritual firmament; or as the cleaving of another rock in our Horeb, to supply us with the refreshing streams of life. From those “blessed lips” proceeded ideas of which the world had never heard before—ideas which, although repugnant to the general spirit of mankind, have been gaining ground ever since, and will one day be the imperial thoughts of cabinets and kingdoms.

At the very opening of his discourse, he brings, at once, under their notice the great subject of *happiness*—a subject which has ever been the master-theme of human thought, and the primal end of human purpose and action. Lived there ever a man, however learned, or however rude, through whose

* The locality of this mountain is not known. Some have thought it to be Tabor, and some a hill, called the “Hill of Blessing.”

mind the question has not often revolved, as the most impulsive sentiment of the heart, "Who will show us any good?" It is the deep and unceasing cry of humanity, and He now responds to it who only could. The Teacher of the world took up the world-wide theme, and expressed in brief, but clear, language the *great elements of well-being*.

In looking closely at these *elements* of blessedness, we discover two things which are worthy of our attention—a *general correspondence between the whole, and a fundamental difference between some*. The examination of these two points will, we trust, develop the moral meaning and spirit of the passage. Here is—

I. A GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE WHOLE.

As sources of happiness, they agree in three things—they are all *spiritual, unpopular, and present*. First. They are all spiritual: they are states of *heart*. They are not something *out* of man, after which he has to reach, not something that is put into him as an *entity* distinct from his being; they are states into which his heart is to pass—they are *soul-habits*. This is a feature of Christ's theory of happiness that gives it a universal application—that puts blessedness within the reach of every man. Had Christ represented the elements of happiness as consisting in any particular condition, then it is clear that, whatever condition that might have been, it could not have come not only not *equally* within the reach of all, but *not at all* within the reach of many; or had he represented them as connected with a certain order of intellectual talent, or a certain amount of intellectual acquirement, it is perfectly obvious that a large portion of every successive generation, from the diversity of capacity and opportunity, would be excluded from the blessedness of being. But when he makes them to consist in heart-states, then he puts them within the equal reach of all. *Humility—meekness—mercifulness—desire for rectitude, &c.*—are they not states as attainable by the child as the adult, the poor as the rich, the untutored as the sage? "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are

the issues of life." The river of life takes its rise in the heart, and the germs of paradise are imbedded there.

Let its rock be smitten, that the river may flow ;
Let its soil be tilled, that the germs may grow.

Another point of correspondence between them all is, secondly, that they are all *unpopular*. The general mind of mankind has looked for happiness everywhere rather than to the heart. It has never attached the idea of blessedness to the dispositions mentioned by Christ. It has ever said, in its heart, Blessed are the men high in office, and robed in magnificence ; blessed are the opulent and the gay ; blessed are the victorious and the valiant ; and, sometimes, blessed are the intelligent and the wise ;—but public sentiment has never yet said, Blessed are the poor in spirit, and the meek in heart. But whilst Christ's idea has *generally* been unpopular in the world, it was *especially* so with the men he addressed. They were Jews : all their notions of religion, greatness, and happiness, were pre-eminently material ; and it would seem that the minds of the " multitudes " who surrounded Jesus were filled and fired, at this moment, with gross ideas of well-being. Their hearts beat high with the hope that HE whom they had followed up the mountain would assure them of the speedy conquest of Rome, and the reinstating of their country in more than the wealth and grandeur of ancient times. But how directly did the ideas of Jesus clash with all these notions and hopes ! What sublime indifference to popularity, what unconquerable intrepidity of soul, did he display, who now—in the face of assembled thousands, whose excited minds were raging with ocean fury for conquest and dominion—stated, at the very outset of his discourse, views that would strike at the strongest prejudices, and dissipate the most eager and brilliant hopes ! The fact that Christ's view of happiness — which are undeniably true both in philosophy and experience — are thus so unpopular, argues (1) the *divinity of his mission*, and (2) the *moral darkness of man*.

But another point of correspondence between them all is,

thirdly, they are all *present*. "Blessed *are*," says Christ; not blessed shall be. He who has these dispositions *is* blessed. The dispositions are blessedness, and as the dispositions increase in purity and strength, the blessedness will heighten and expand. We are not to look to any distant locality or onward period to get happiness, but to the state of the heart. The true heaven is in the soul. Unless glory is revealed within, there will be no glory without. A soul clouded with guilt, and turbulent with conflicting passions, will darken the brightest suns, and turn the sweetest music into discord.

Glances at some of the Great Preachers of England.

No. II.—JEREMY TAYLOR.

(*Concluded from page 222.*)

It was the earnest exclamation of the afflicted patriarch of Uz, "Oh that mine adversary had written a book!" The wise sheikh of Idumea knew, thirty centuries ago, what we know now, that if we could accurately measure a man of mind, be he friend or foe, we must examine his *book*. A man's book and a man's *brains* are, to all practical purposes of literary judgment, convertible terms. If a man see fit to commit his thoughts to the press, he enters a court from which he cannot retire, and from the decisions of which there can be no appeal. He must say, "*Quod scripsi, scripsi*," whether his pen lead him to honour or to disgrace. He has crossed the Rubicon, and he must pass on either to the Capitol or the Tarpeian precipice. Geologists tell us of the foot-prints of birds, distinctly visible upon solid rocks, which were impressed there while yet the rocks were in a soft and yielding state: so an author leaves the stamp of his mind upon the

printed page, and there it will remain, for good or evil, to his glory or his shame.

All great results must have adequate causes, and a great book must have been produced by a great mind. The criticisms of two centuries have attested the worth of the "works" of Jeremy Taylor, and the result is a favourable award, which can never be reversed. There may be chaff in his wheat; dross in his gold; hay, wood, and stubble, in the fabric of his genius; but to deny him a lofty seat in the realms of mind, would be as foolish as to assert that Milton was a poor poet, or Augustin a weak divine. Let us now—as correctly as we can, in the brief space allotted to us—endeavour to form an estimate of Taylor's mind, and see in what his literary excellence consists.

Let us look (1) at Taylor's intellect; (2) at his learning; (3) at his imagination. 1. Let us try to form a correct estimate of Taylor's *intellect*. By intellect we mean mental power—the capability of suggesting, following out, and carrying to a successful conclusion, important and elevated trains of thought. Study Aristotle, as a logician; Bacon as a philosopher; Shakspeare, as a poet; Newton, as an astronomer; Kant, as a metaphysician; Bishop Butler, as a divine; and you will not hesitate to pronounce them men of first-rate intellectual power. Strength of intellect lies at the foundation of all abiding literary greatness. The lofty Andes rise from a *granite* base; and if a man would rise in the realms of mind, his intellect must be of the stoniest and most solid kind. A man's greatness—to be a preacher, philosopher, or poet—can only be according to the greatness of his *thoughts*. Tried by this standard, Taylor, we think, would be excluded from the *first* class of great men.

To quote passages from his works to prove this position would be a very unwelcome task. Suffice it to say that all his biographers—so far as we know—admit it as indisputable. Bishop Heber says, "As a reasoner, I do not think him matchless." Another biographer says, "In originality, continuity, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of reasoning, he is

vastly inferior to Locke, or Chillingworth, or Barrow. . . . There is no man, so far as we know, who is so apt to diminish the force or injure the impression of his reasoning by an absurd interadmixture, not only of questionable arguments, but sometimes of the most unpardonable fallacies; no man who more fatally mingles his 'iron and clay.' But Jeremy Taylor is not only guilty of the frequent employment of sound and unsound arguments in the establishment of the same proposition, but he often places arguments of the most various value in the closest juxtaposition in his series of proof. The weak are not put by themselves with the wise caution that they are merely thrown in as some slight additament of probability. No such thing: he carries his gold and baser metal all in one purse. He often seems to have marshalled his arguments in the order in which they first suggested themselves, and thus the rawest recruits are often seen side by side with the best-disciplined in the troop." We have said enough, we think, to show that, though Taylor possessed much mental greatness, he did not belong to the *highest* class of mind.

2. Let us glance at Taylor's learning. No one can think of his profound erudition without feeling as the worthy Dominie Sampson felt, when he gazed upon the goodly library committed by Guy Mannering to his care; nor without exclaiming, as the dominie did, "Prodigious! prodigious!!" We have read of some author who, having written a book, and dedicated it to posterity, was told by a witty friend that he was afraid it would not reach its destination; and if you, gentle reader, would see what multifarious learning existed on the library-boards, and in the capacious brains of scholars two centuries ago, much of which has, since then, been buried deep in "Lethe's stream," read Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," or Jeremy Taylor's works.

"Almost every kind of learning appears to have been cultivated by Taylor with equal success, if we may judge by the utterly worthless kind of books he quotes. . . . His appetite for knowledge was voracious; and, like most other voracious appetites, it was far from fastidious. It was a sort

of intellectual *bulimia*: nothing came amiss to it. Luxuries and carrion, sumptuous food and broken victuals, classical delicacies, and the coarsest fare of the cloister and the schools, were all devoured with nearly equal eagerness, and digested, apparently, with equal ease." We are far from thinking, however, that Taylor derived any injury from, or deserves any blame for, his abundant perusal of books. A man *must* read, if he would think, just as he must eat if he would live, taking care, of course, that he eat no more material nor mental food than he can *digest*. Little-minded men, in reference to reading, are like a certain Doctor, of whom Robert Hall said, "He put so many books upon his head that his brains couldn't move;" while great-minded men are like Jeremy Taylor, the fire of whose genius could consume and convert into bright, exhilarating, far-shining flame, whatever kind of fuel, and however much, might be heaped upon it. Let us remember the weighty saying of Bacon, that "reading makes a full man." Let us never forget the inspired exhortation, "Give attendance to reading." Even in prison, and with the near prospect of death before him, Paul longed for "the books, and especially the parchments," he had left behind him at Troas.

3. We have only a brief space in which to speak of the most prominent faculty of Taylor's mind—namely, his wonderful *imagination*. The following extract, from an eloquent biographer, will express our thoughts upon the point far more powerfully than we could possibly utter them:—

"*This* was not, as was the case with his reason, repressed by other more powerful faculties; on the contrary, it bound all the rest to its chariot wheels, and rode through the whole of his writings in one long triumph. The severe discipline of reason could not tame, nor could floods of learning quench it.

In estimating the astonishing vigour and exuberance of this faculty, we are to take into account not only the incessant, the prodigal, display it is ever making, but the unpromising topics which it has often succeeded in adorning, and the obstacles in defiance of which it has exerted itself. . . . There is

scarcely a subject so hopelessly abstruse that Taylor cannot adorn it with grace, or clothe it with beauty. His fancy to the reader is as refreshing as those aromatic odours which stole on the senses of the wearied soldiers of Cyrus when toiling through the sandy Desert of Arabia: even the frozen, arctic, circle of metaphysics and casuistry is not beyond the magic touch of his all-subduing genius. When *he* treats these subjects, they are visited for once with the glow of a summer sun. Verdure and beauty, foliage and flowers, spring up in the region of perpetual snows. When *he* treats them, it may be said, ‘Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.’”

Gentle reader, we have now taken a “glance” at the “works” of Jeremy Taylor. We are conscious of the imperfection of our effort, and feel ourselves almost open to the charge of sacrilege for discoursing upon such a theme in so short a space. From our humble Pisgah we have pointed thee to fertile regions and noble scenes. If the prospect hath pleased thee, go in, and possess the land: “it floweth with milk and honey.”

J. H.

Theological and Pulpit Literature.

REMARKS ON THE MODERN PULPIT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HOMILIST.

DEAR SIR,—As you style your periodical, somewhat boldly, a “Pulpit Review,” will you make space for a few lines from one who proposes a very brief review of the pulpit?

Undoubtedly, at this time, there is a strong suspicion abroad that the pulpit is not up with the times, and reflects but little the spirit of the age; and every religious journal and periodical has something to say, more or less, on the subject; Utopian statements as to what it should be, and fiery denunciations of what it should not be, are printed in books, oratorized at public meetings, sighed forth at ordinations, and discoursed on in parlours. Still, one feels a wish to add yet a little to what has been already said on this subject, and that because there is sadly wanting that honest outspokenness as to things as they are, which, by boldly denouncing evils, shall clear the way for the bold following of right.

The modern pulpit has men who, for learning, genius, zeal, piety, and religious soundness, may vie with, and are worthy to be the successors of, the pulpit possessors of any age; yet such a statement is by no means true of the pulpit as a whole, and ought not to be put on record without a fair statement of those other things which mar, if they do not disgrace, it.

Perhaps nothing strikes one more in these days than the want of *independence* the pulpit displays. The expectation of the Church is, and evangelical custom decides, that the mind of every preacher should move along a prescribed line—keep duly within the compass of a certain creed. In his ordination charge he was probably pointed to logical Barrow, sublime Howe, pathetic Baxter, and unctuous Flavel, with a tolerably lengthy assurance that when his sermons departed but a hair's-breadth from those models—in all the doctrines they held, if not in the language they used—he would be entering on dangerous ground. And this lesson we find aptly learned by the many: they become creed expounders; adapters thereof, by the help of texts, to the expectations and wants of the people. Whatever doubts, as to phraseology or deeper things, are in his mind, he gives not—he dreads to give—expression to in the pulpit. That vague, but terrible and easily-made, charge of being unorthodox, which would follow any instance of uncouth style of language or tone of thought, fetters his soul. “Woe is he if he preach not the gospel”—*according to the authorized models*; if he keep not to the letter. Hence, generally, in the pulpit, the same thing is said in much the same way, continually, whether they illustrate a text, dwell on a topic, set forth a doctrine, administer consolation, or denounce sin; still the creed, the whole creed, and nothing but the creed, is ever on their minds, and traceable in every part of their sermons; and thus want of independence is manifest in the choice of themes for the pulpit. The varied circumstances, the ruling passions, the constraining motives of every-day life, on which it is most needful that men should receive religious instruction, are almost, in reality, passed over. The laws of pulpit propriety, and the supposed necessary limits of evangelical teaching, confine the

preacher's recognition not only to two classes of persons, and the relation of the gospel to these two alone, but confine the manner of viewing and speaking of these in a style of language and instruction as far removed as possible from this "*ignorant present time*." The one is alluded to, and congratulated on being clothed in white robes; the other thundered at, and mourned over, as clothed in deepest black; whilst the black spots on the white robe, and the white spots on the black robe, receive scarcely a passing mention. The one is always being consigned to destruction, and the other handed to heaven. Now, this unworldliness, this unlikeliest way of dealing with truth, does not prove very influential with men passing more than six-sevenths of their time in real, every-day, world life, and not yet standing, or capable of standing, on the speaker's "post of observation." It removes the gospel, therefore, out of their sphere of thought and current of feeling; and, like a balloon suspended in the air over their heads, though it may attract their gaze for a time, and inspire some curious souls with a desire for a journey into the clouds, bright tinted and beautiful, towards which it soars, still, though they linger a moment, leaves them no way obstructed in their ordinary earthly paths, their business avocations, nor less satisfied with the solid earth on which they walk. The wider charge, therefore, of a want of thoughtfulness may be rightly brought against the modern pulpit; and, indeed, if the previous charges be true, how should it think? The magic touch of the creed "*divides*" every text, and furnishes the something to say on every subject, and there is the regular array of proof texts, which long prescription has declared apt, and to be expected. Thoughtfulness in the pulpit is discoverable in the general, rather than in the ingenious illustration, application, and enlargement of the *given* idea: hence we have so little originality in sermonizers;—nay, the very idiosyncrasies of men seem to be lost, and the difference between this sermon and that is the accident of an illustration, an argument, or their absence, or is left to peep out in the method of delivery. The man who thinks and sets others a-thinking is a *rara avis*. Then, another charge to be brought against the modern pulpit, more grave, but not less true, is a *want of honesty*. Indeed, a system of things which represses thoughtfulness and frowns on originality, demanding only the reproduction of already formed opinions, as much as possible in a certain chosen and stereotyped language, must necessarily hold out encouragement to the kind of dishonesty I mean: for dishonest I take it to be to preach as your own other men's sermons; to gain a name, and strive after popularity, by arranging on your *string* pearls stolen from other men's treasures. There seems good reason for believing that this thing has reached an unparalleled height in these days.

Yet, despite the popularity of this, we think the want of honesty

seriously takes away from the true importance of the pulpit. What respect can any one feel for a man detected again and again in unacknowledged piracy of sermons? What can one even think of the value and the durability of a popularity that is gained by such means? If, when a late Chancellor of the Exchequer was found guilty of plagiarism, the whole press opened against him in reproof, shall we not speak out as plainly against the same dishonesty in the pulpit?

Other things might be added, but I stay my pen. Less ought not, more, perhaps, need be said. Well will it be if anything should lead us to have a truer "trust in truth," and a greater courage in "being ourselves."

Yours, &c.,

SCRUTATOR.

LITERARY NOTICES.

INFIDELITY: its Aspects, Causes, and Agencies; being the Prize Essay of the British Organization of the Evangelical Alliance. By the REV. THOMAS PEARSON, of Eyemouth. Partridge and Oakey.

THE plan of this volume is remarkably good; it is at once clear and comprehensive. All the sections, which are numerous, seem to us placed in their right logical relation, and are well defined; the execution is equal to the scheme; and the whole superstructure stands before us as a goodly temple, where earnest sceptics may find a solution of many of their most soul-pressing problems, and be taught to worship and adore. The writer develops an extensive acquaintance with the views and tactics of modern infidelity as it is found both in England and on the Continent. He has traced it through many of its metaphysical labyrinths, brought it out, taken off its mask, and held it up in the broad daylight of reason and consciousness. We do not say that the author has done all that is necessary, indeed, infidelity has some questions he has never mooted, and his replies to others are sometimes based upon postulates whose truth may be fairly questioned, and are consequently inconclusive and unsatisfactory. But we do aver that he has done much with great ability and right-heartedness that has never yet been done in this discussion.

The style is very superior : it is a deep and translucent river flowing calmly on without surge or ripple, mirroring the precious lights of the truths that hang above, and exposing, at the same time, the muddy depths of error that lie beneath. Its spirit, too, is much to our taste ; it has nothing of the arrogance and acrimony that have hitherto disgraced theological polemics. It has all the calm candour of conscious faith, and all the kindly feeling which true faith ever inspires. It is free from the insolence of a mere hereditary creedman, and displays the respectfulness which ever characterizes the debater who has wrestled earnestly with the difficulties himself. We have read the book once, and we propose doing what few books save the Bible tempt us to do—read it the *second* time.

THE CHURCHES FOR THE TIMES, AND THE PREACHERS FOR THE PEOPLE ; or, the Bible, the Churches as they were, as they are, and as they ought to be, and the People. By WILLIAM FERGUSON, Bicester, Oxon.

THE title will put the reader in possession of the general scope and aim of the author in this volume. Although we demur to some things in this book, and are not always pleased with the manner in which other things are stated, we have no hesitation in cordially and strongly recommending it to our readers. It is a book of startling revelations and rousing earnestness. The writer sees much that is wrong in connexion with the Church, feels it deeply, and manfully exposes it, and we honour him for it. He has a right to be heard. He is neither a cynical theorist nor a sentimental lover of his race whose compassion dies away in words. He is one of those self-denying, practical, and comprehensive philanthropists, whose heart swells with sympathy for the poor and ignorant of our own land, and who carries the Bible in one hand and bread in the other. Let the voice of such a man be heard ! Let its bold, earnest, and honest tones ring through the heart of a selfish and material church !

SAINT PAUL : Five Discourses by the Rev. ADOLPHE MONOD, of Paris, Translated by the Rev. W. G. BARRETT, of Royston. Arthur Hall, Virtue, and Co.

THOSE who read the leading homily in our last number will not require any recommendation of a book written by the same author on such

a subject as SAINT PAUL. This little volume abounds with noble thoughts and fine suggestions.

LAWFUL STRIFE; a Sermon preached in Surrey Chapel, on Wednesday Morning, May 11, 1853, before the London Missionary Society.
By SAMUEL MARTIN. Ward and Co.

SOME men speak with more force than they write: the energy of their soul passes with greater effect through the tongue than the pen. Others put forth more power, and do themselves more justice, in writing. Mr. Martin belongs decidedly to the former class. Not that he does not write well—his healthy sentiments, genial spirit, and fascinating individualities, in connexion with a style ever chaste, pointed, and sententious, give a great charm to his literary productions—but so powerful is his speech, that, when he throws the oral into a written form, it appears tame to him who has heard it. His appearance is a sermon. As he stands before you, he does not strike you as one who eats, and drinks, and sleeps, and lives the ordinary life of mortals, but your mind connects him at once with the unseen realms of holy abstractions and divine communings. And then his voice, too, is like an echo from eternity: its touching tones, modulated by the deep thoughts and deeper feeling of a reflective and an exquisitely sensitive nature, carry his ideas right home to the heart. We heard this discourse, and we write under the impression. We have heard many discourses in the same place, on similar occasions, but none ever approached this in its soul-subduing power, and that apart from all those prettyisms, fineries, and oratorical attempts, which are too frequently associated with such performances. We earnestly recommend this excellent sermon, of an extraordinary man, to the perusal of our readers. Let religious societies try themselves by the principles here laid down; and “long life” to the man who preaches like this!

ROGER MILLER; or, Heroism in Humble Life. A Narrative. By
GEORGE ORME. C. Gilpin.

THIS is a deeply interesting biography. It is well written, for the writer is lost in his hero, and the hero is worth looking at and following.

CHRISTOPHANEIA. The Doctrine of the Manifestations of the Son of God, under the Economy of the Old Testament. By the late Rev. GEORGE BALDERSTON KIDD, of Scarborough. Edited by ORLANDO J. DOBBIN, LL.D., M.R.I.A. Ward and Co.

To the Christian mind no theme can be more interesting and important than the subject-matter of this volume. But for the pre-ordained "manifestations of the Son of God," mankind would not have existed, nor the earth itself, we think, been called into being. The formation of our globe; the creation of our race; the rise, progress, and fall of nations; the varied, vast, and wonderful schemes of Providence; are, therefore, according to God's eternal purposes, "which he purposed in Christ Jesus." Just as the radii of a circle meet in the centre, and the rivers of the earth flow toward the sea, so nature, providence, and grace centre in the divine Man of Nazareth—the incarnate, redeeming God. The apostle John, in the visions of Patmos, beheld Christ as "the Lamb in the midst of the throne"—as the centre around which revolve all the orbs of material, mental, and spiritual being; and as the sun from which they derive their vitality, light, and glory. If these things areso—if Christ is the "Prince of the kings of the earth;" if he possesses "all power in heaven and in earth;" if "all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made"; if he is "the brightness of the Father's glory," "the Desire of nations," the alone Sacrifice for human sin, and the alone Saviour of human souls—how interesting and important the effort to follow the benignant and sublime pathway of "the manifestations of the Son of God" as they shine in the pages of the infallible word. This good work our author has undertaken, and undertaken it in a spirit becoming such a sacred occupation.

The result is before us in a production of no common order. It contains an examination of every passage which refers to the Redeemer in the Old and New Testaments; and the research is prosecuted with an amount of acuteness, learning, and labour which deserves much praise.

We do not mean to assert, however, that the book is without blemishes:—1. Some of the dissertations might have been spared, seeing that we possess the substance of them in Dr. Smith's immortal work, "The Scriptural Testimony of the Messiah." Not that we accuse Mr. Kidd of plagiarism; but on such a subject the mind of the student is sure to revert to the Doctor's work, in the footsteps of whom our author has been laudably ambitious to follow, though, in some parts of the journey, he has not walked *æquis passibus*. 2. The work is not well digested and arranged. It has rather the appearance of raw material than of a finished fabric. Not only does the building bear many marks of the

hammer and the saw, but some parts of it are unglazed, and without roof. It contains many "orient pearls at random strung." 3. The other drawback from the perfection of the work is an excessive tendency here and there to *spiritualize*, and to seek for Messianic references in passages where no such references were, we think, intended to be found. But here we would be very gentle in our censures, for the author errs upon the right side. In such a matter we would rather go astray with Cocceius than with Crellius; we would rather with the former "find Christ everywhere in the Bible," than with the latter "find him nowhere."

We can conscientiously commend this work to every thoughtful reader of Scripture as containing much interesting and instructive information upon the most important subject which can occupy the human mind.



A HOMILY

ON

The Manifestness of Divine Benignity.

“For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes.”—PSA. xxvi. 3.

“GOD IS BEAUTY AND LOVE ITSELF,” said Plato, as his clear, philosophic eye gazed on the outspread universe when reflected on the bright mirror of his own soul; and so echo all whose spiritual vision is not dimmed by sensual feeling and sceptic thought. And such exceptions are, alas! to be found. Multitudes there are who see, or profess to see, but little of Divine goodness in this fair creation. The *evils* which they discover, natural and moral, are of such magnitude and number in their eyes as to obscure the rays and break the harmonies of creative and presiding LOVE. These evils seem to them as a haze over creation’s landscape, a cloud on its sun, a distressing dissonance amidst its orchestral sounds.

The existence of this class is the only justification for any attempt, on the part of humble man, at a formal exposition and defence of the goodness of God: we say justification, for it may well seem to the truly thoughtful and devout a work of supererogation, if not of presumption. They may, with forceful propriety, ask, What tongue or pen can make Divine “lovingkindness” more manifest than the great Creator has made it? Is it not everywhere visible? Above, does it not glow in every shooting ray, and swim in every shifting cloud? Around, is it not the breath of all life, and the beauty of all forms? Within, is it not the heart of life, the impulse of action, the fountain of pleasant sympathies, and the spring of uplifting hopes? Verily, it is the throbbing heart and smiling face of all things, and who can make it more manifest than it is? Will he who does not hear it in the

ten thousand voices of nature hear it in the feeble articulations of man? or will he who sees it not in the glowing page of universal life be likely to discern it in the dry pages of human logic? We affect no indifference to this appeal, for we are conscious of its force. At the same time, we have the impression that the submitting of this great and all-manifest subject to the process of thought and investigation may serve, in some measure, the cause of truth, and the development of our spiritual powers.

It is expedient at the outset that we define what we mean by Divine goodness or benignity. We do not mean *good doing*. A being may do many good works, works tending to general happiness, who is himself not good; and, on the other hand, it is possible for a being to do certain works whose tendency is towards suffering, who may, nevertheless, be of a benevolent disposition. We mean *good-being*—goodness of nature. We mean not merely that he does good things, but that his general purpose, disposition, nature, are to do good, and good only; that benevolence is the very spring and stamina of his character. How, then, is this fact of the Divine *nature* to be ascertained? David says, “Thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes,” and we believe that he expresses the experience of humanity. The loving-kindness of God is ever before the eyes of man: it is a fact ever before the eyes of his *investigating intellect, general consciousness, and biblical faith*.

I. GOD’S BENIGNITY IS A FACT EVER BEFORE THE EYES OF MAN’S INVESTIGATING INTELLECT. His reasoning upon the general facts of the universe, as they come within his observation, must bring up his intellect face to face with the goodness of God as the ultimate fact—the fountal impulse of all. It is not difficult, and it may be interesting and useful, to trace man’s logical pathway up to this great idea. It may be divided into three grand stages, as follows:—

First. *That the master-disposition of a moral being is ever the essence of his moral character*. The mind is so constituted

that it cannot be under the controlling sway of two passions at the same time. Its government is ever autocratic; there is no sharing the throne; it has one, and but one, master at a time, and that master is absolute. All the varied impulses of the soul have been resolved by some moral philosophers, and, we think, with accuracy, into two grand dispositions—the *good-seeking* and the *self-seeking*. Perhaps all the affections which move us as moral beings are but modifications of one of these. Be this as it may, the master-disposition, whatever it be, is the spirit and essence of moral character; it is the spring of all the actions, the foundation of all the habits; it is the vital sap that gives life and form and hue to every branch, stem, and leaf, of character. This is the *heart* of moral beings. Hence, with a change of the presiding disposition—which, as a fact, occurs at times in the history of man—there comes a thorough revolution of character. Morally, the individual is “a new creation.” New attributes invest his character, new aspirations inspire his breast, and new pursuits enlist his powers.

The next reasoning stage in this pathway is—

Secondly. *That the master disposition of an absolutely competent being is ever expressed in the general tendency of his works.* Where a being is deficient either in wisdom to plan, or in power to execute, it would be unfair to regard the general bearing of his work as expressing the strongest desire of his heart, whether benevolent or otherwise. Such a being may be amongst the most kind and generous, may wish well, and well only, and yet be so destitute of the contriving and executing faculties as to produce by his operations more misery than happiness, a result repugnant to all the deepest feelings of his nature. Such, however, can never be the case where there is *absolute* competence. Let a being have wisdom equal to the formation of a scheme fitted in every point to the full carrying out of his desires, and power sufficient to meet and master every opposing contingency that may by any possibility arise, and we are then warranted to regard the tendency of his works as the exponent of his

master-disposition. Such a being is God. He has, confessedly, all wisdom and all power; and we are, therefore, authorized to look upon the universe as the *expression of his heart*.

The next stage is—

Thirdly. *That the general tendency of the universe is to produce happiness.* The common heart of humanity echoes this truth. However serious, and even exaggerated, the views of some may be concerning the evils that are in the world, deeply seated, as we shall soon see, in the general mind is the impression that happiness is the law and tenor of all nature. It has no other idea until it begins to *speculate*. Some biblical critics maintain that the first idea produced by the reading of any portion of scripture is most probably the correct one. Whether this be true or not, we believe that this first impression that nature makes upon the general mind of humanity is the true one, for this general impression is confirmed by all *scientific research*. Science demonstrates two things:—First. That the organization of every sentient being is contrived for happiness: that every faculty, sense, limb, vessel, and fibre, are so adjusted as to conduce to the well-being of the whole, so that the movement of each yields gratification. Its keen eye has never yet detected, in the case of any creature, one single constituent of his existence which he could regard as *intended* to give pain. Not one of the countless myriads of sentient vessels can he find “fitted for destruction.”* And, secondly, science demonstrates that the external sphere of each sentient being has suitable provisions for its happiness. Through all the realms of animal nature into which philosophy has gone, from the tiniest insect up to man, there is found in the ordained sphere of each creature a supply for every want, an object for every

* “No anatomist ever observed a system of organization calculated to produce pain and disease; or, in explaining the parts of the human body, ever said, This is to irritate; this is to inflame; this duct is to convey the gravel to the kidneys; this gland, to secrete the humour which forms the gout.”—*Paley*.

desire, a pleasure to penetrate every sense. Should it be said, how can man judge of the happiness of others? Is not happiness a matter of personal consciousness, and how can he predicate concerning the feelings of the lower creation? A similarity of nature qualifies him for this. We can imagine, indeed, that a being who has not in his constitution anything in common with terrestrial existences, who has never derived a single pleasure from matter in any one of its elements or combinations, would be entirely incompetent to determine what natural organization and sphere were fitted for happiness, and what were not. But such is not man: he has both analogy and experience to help him in his judgment. By his own happiness he can determine the happiness of others. He can infer what the tendency of the universe is to other mundane existences from what it is to him, and he feels that it is to him happiness.

But if the general tendency of the universe is happiness, how comes it to pass that there is so much *suffering* in the world? We are by no means anxious to underrate the amount of evil; truth never gains either by ignoring or depreciating facts, which seem to tell in another direction. Evil exists, and we admit it, even to the fullest extent in which it is found, and yet maintain, with all the confidence of conviction, the position we have asserted. There are two facts in connexion with suffering which show that its existence is compatible with the doctrine that the general tendency of the universe is toward happiness:—First. *That the sufferings of a creature here are but a very inconsiderable item in its life when compared with its enjoyments.* Take the sufferings of the lower creation: cast into one sum all the pains of hunger and cold, the pangs of parturition, and the throes of death—whether occurring by disease, exhaustion, or predatorial destruction—and who will say that it bears any comparison to the aggregate of pleasure? “There is not a moment,” says an able philosophic writer, “in which the quantity of agreeable sensations, felt by myriads of creatures, may not be far greater than all the pain which is felt at the same moment.”

Of man also this is true. Though we are disposed to believe that the proportion of suffering to happiness, in his experience, is far greater than in the other sentient tenants of our earth, still to him pain is the exception, and pleasure is the rule. His memories of pain, it is true, are ever more vivid than those of pleasure, and far more disposed is he to talk of his trials than his blessings; but is not the very rarity of his sufferings as compared with his enjoyments the cause of this? The man who has returned home from a long voyage on the mighty waters thinks and talks more of the hardships of the tempests that beat fiercely on his bark in one night, than of the smiling skies and propitious gales of many months. So it is: the uncommon ever makes a deeper impression than the general—the incidental exception than the general rule. The whole suffering of humanity here is but as one stormy night in the voyage of its earthly history: it is but a cloudy moment in the bright day of life. Evil is but a jarring note or two at most in creation's long and joyous anthem.

The other fact, secondly, connected with suffering, which makes its existence compatible with our position is, *that it subserves benevolent ends*. It would not be difficult to point out many probable advantages which result from the sufferings of the lower creatures;* and, as to the beneficial results of human suffering, they are too many and manifest to admit of rational dispute. Philosophy,† as well as piety, recognises and proclaims the doctrine that “affliction worketh good.” Resulting, as it ever does, from the infraction of laws, it warns the criminal—rouses his intellect to the study of the system under which he lives, in order to put himself in harmony therewith. It is the rod of Nature chastising its wayward and rebellious child. Vice is ever checked by it, and by it virtue is frequently developed. Physical evils are spiritual blessings.

* Those who would like to pursue this subject should read the third volume of MacCulloch's inestimable work on “The Attributes of God.”

† See a lecture on “The Goodness of the Deity,” by Dr. Thomas Brown, in his “Philosophy of the Human Mind.”

It is the sufferer that retires to Bethesda, turns from earth to heaven, from the natural to the supernatural, and, with an anxious eye and a throbbing heart, waits the visits of the descending angel. Evil is evil, but evil is not an end: good is the end, and evil is ever rushing to it, like the thousand streams to the great Atlantic. The evils of this world, like the furious storm that spreads devastation over sea and land, will die away in a clear sky and a pure atmosphere, and a world inspired with new life. The high intuitions of poetry acquiesce and revel in this idea:—

“The groans of nature in this nether world,
Which Heaven has heard for ages, have an end,
Foretold by prophets, and by poets sung,
Whose fire was kindled at the prophet’s lamp.
Six thousand years of sorrow have well-nigh
Fulfilled their tardy and disastrous course
Over a sinful world; and what remains
Of this tempestuous state of human things
Is merely as the working of a sea
Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest:
For He whose ear the winds are, and the clouds
The dust that waits upon his sultry march,
When sin hath moved him, and his wrath is hot,
Shall visit earth in mercy; shall descend
Propitious in his chariot, payed with love,
And what his storms have blasted and defaced
For man’s revolt, shall with a smile repair.”

Now, if suffering is thus an insignificant item in the history of sentient existence as compared with enjoyment, and that item tends to good, the existence of suffering is in nowise inconsistent with the fact that the tendency of the universe is happiness; and this general tendency must be taken as expressing, as powerfully as anything can express, the master-disposition of the great Creator, and that master-disposition is GOODNESS. “Contrivance,” says Paley, “proves design, and the predominant tendency of the contrivance indicates the disposition of the designer. The world abounds with contrivances, and all the contrivances which we are acquainted

which are directed to beneficial purposes." In the general tendency, then, of things, the "loving-kindness" of God stands out before the eye of intellect. Reason meets it everywhere : in the minerals of the mountains, and in the treasures of the deep ; in the springing blade, the blooming flower, and bending tree ; in the internal organism and external provision of all material and mental existences ; in the flowing light and the rolling atmosphere ; in the changing temperature and the circling seasons. *Goodness* is an ubiquitous presence to the open eye—an eternal anthem to the open ear of inquiring reason. It hears "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are therein," proclaim, in ever-varying tones, "GOD IS GOOD TO ALL, AND HIS TENDER MERCIES ARE OVER ALL HIS WORKS."

II. GOD'S BENIGNITY IS A FACT EVER BEFORE THE EYE OF MAN'S GENERAL CONSCIOUSNESS. Whatever may be the force of the remarks we have offered, or the potency of any observations that have been, or can be, offered, on what may be called the *logical* argument for Divine goodness, we are disposed to admit that a *speciously* strong case might be made out against it. Turning away his attention from the immeasurable regions of pleasure that everywhere smile and sing around him, and confining his notice exclusively to scenes gloomy with sorrow and tenanted with the victims of suffering, an opponent may gather up facts from this dark side of things which his logical ingenuity might forge into an argument that would tell upon the unthinking and sceptically-inclined of his fellow-men. He may thus cloud Divine goodness from the eye of the mere *reasoning* faculty of such, by awakening certain speculative doubts suggested by a miserably partial and distorted survey of facts. But we now proceed to a view of this subject which no speculative reasoning can obscure ; refer to a vision which man has of Divine goodness, which no sophistries can becloud, and that vision is the vision of *consciousness*. Whatever may be the mere notions of certain men upon the

subject, we can show that *universal man* believes in it with a faith which underlies all the phenomena of his moral life.

The following facts will show this :—

First. *Universally felt responsibility for moral evil.* Why did the INFINITE permit the introduction of sin? He must have foreseen it, and all the evils which, in the course of ages, would spring out of it must have been clear to his eye; and seeing the whole, and being all-wise and all-powerful, surely he might have prevented it. Can you maintain the goodness of Him who allowed it to spring up in his universe, and work such ruin amidst his rational creation? Thus argues the impugner of our doctrine. We know of no reply more suitable than this :—*The deep consciousness of humanity charges itself with moral evil, and thereby clears its Maker.* Man, everywhere, and in all periods, charges sin upon himself, and vindicates his Maker. Why else does he always hold his fellow responsible for crime, and readily render to him credit for his virtue? Why else does he feel the pangs of self-condemnation and remorse? Why else is he ever seeking to appease his Maker for his wrong-doings? Every sting of remorse, every tear of penitence, every attempt at expiation, that every breath of prayer for absolution, attest his belief sin originates with him, and not with his Creator. Indeed, the social and religious phenomena of the world would be an inexplicable enigma if you denied the existence of this deep conviction.

But did the *first* sinners feel this? Apart from scripture testimony, we conclude that if their posterity, who sin under the seductive and tempting influences which have been transmitted to them through the moral delinquencies of past ages, feel that they are the authors of sin, surely those must have felt it far more deeply who sinned without any such temptations. Man has this consciousness, then. Your speculative reasoning may incline his understanding to believe that God is the Author of sin, but never will you work from his inner heart the deep-rooted belief that it is ever from himself.

Now, the fact that humanity charges *moral evil* upon itself

involves its responsibility for well-nigh all the sufferings that afflict it; for what *natural* evil is there in the world that springs not from moral? Whence proceed the social, political, and religious evils which have ever grievously afflicted mankind? Slavery, war, intolerance, oppression, superstition—have they not always their source in “spiritual wickedness”? And whence, too, proceed many, if not all, our physical trials? Can you not trace many of the diseases and all the miseries of poverty to intemperance, indolence, extravagance, and such like vices? But what of *death*, it may be said. Is not that the chief affliction, and is there not reason to believe, from the fact that death was in the world before sin, as well as from the organization of our nature, that death would have occurred in man’s history had he not sinned? We reply, that death, regarded as mere physical dissolution, is not necessarily an evil; it might be a blessing. It is an evil only when accompanied with pains, and attended with fears and apprehensions. Let it be freed from pains, and ever regarded as a *certain* introduction to a higher and happier state, and then it would be hailed as one of the most blessed events in our history. On the assumption that death would have taken place had there been no sin, it would clearly thus have been a *blessing*, and not a *curse*. It is sin that gives death its sting, and makes our spirits, as well as our bodies, its victim. How, then, does this fact in our consciousness sweep away all mere speculative objections to the goodness of God, and present him to us as the ALL-GOOD.

Another fact which proves this universal consciousness is—

Secondly. *Universally felt appreciation of benignity as the essence of excellence.* Our mental constitution forces us, by a law over which we have no control, to esteem only the generous and benevolent in character, and to experience repugnance to the stoically indifferent and a strong displeasure to the manifestly malevolent. The saints we canonize, and the heroes we lift to pedestals of honour, have, or are *supposed* to have, more or less *disinterested* benevolence as the base of their character and the spring of all their noble deeds. All

literature gives its heroes this as their inspiration. Candidates for public offices plead its inward promptings as their motive of action, and their claim for suffrage and support. Men everywhere seek the good-will and approbation of their species by their professions of the generous and the kind. Man feels that he must either cultivate or countenance benevolence if he is to enlist the sympathy and gain the respect of his fellow-men. Hence the word is full of benevolent professions; its sacred words fall on the ear of all circles. All who would be loved robe themselves in its holy garb. Let society develop only the malevolent, and would not human respect and love be unknown? Would not souls recoil from souls with horror and with hate? Whence came this love for the generous—this aversion for the malevolent? Did not he who made us give us this? Verily, it is a constituent of our spiritual being. Would he, then, give to his creatures a nature to love supremely what he has not, and to denounce and hate what he has? This is an inadmissible supposition. The tendency of humanity to love the benevolent implies that HE is benevolent.

Another fact which shows this deep faith in God's goodness is—

Thirdly. *A universally felt obligation to worship.* Where is the nation that has not felt the obligation to worship? Where is the man, whatever his speculative beliefs may be, that has not felt that profound reverence and supreme gratitude and devotion were due from him to the great Author of our existence? It is true that this sense of religious duty is frequently rendered dormant through habits of thoughtlessness and sin; but the fact that there are instances where moral appeals have quickened it into dominant energy, even when it seemed in a state the most insensible and dead, proves its existence, even in cases where it is entirely inoperative and undeveloped. Now, does not the existence of this sense imply a profound belief in God's goodness? for could man ever *feel* an obligation to praise a being, unless he believed that being was *praiseworthy*? Impossible! Truly

does Cicero say that "all religious and pious feeling would cease if love and benevolence were denied to God."

We may mention yet another fact which shows man's intuitive faith in God's goodness, and that is—

Fourthly. *Universally felt desirableness of continued existence.* How many of the eight hundred million souls, which make up this generation, were the choice put to them *to be as they are*, or "not to be," would select the latter alternative? We presume few, very few, if any. Very few, even of the few great sufferers, would say, Sooner than remain as we are, let our being end for ever—let every star go out—let us be quenched in eternal midnight. Life as it is—with its toils and diseases, its disappointments and its griefs, its sorrows and its cares—is generally felt to be desirable, or, at any rate, preferable to non-existence. I appeal to the deep heart of the man who impugns the goodness of his Maker. I say to him, Which will you have, my presumptuous and complaining brother—annihilation or your life as it is? His every-day struggles to maintain his life would give the true answer.

If there be such a thing as demonstration, these *facts* of every man's every-day experience demonstrate his *heart's belief in Divine goodness*: a belief this which rises superior to all intellectual reasonings. It is antecedent to all argument; and, as no argument has produced it, no argument can destroy it. Its roots are not in logical premises, but in the moral constitution of the soul. Your strongest antagonistic reasonings are to it as "darts" on the back of the leviathan—"counted as stubble"—as the passing breeze to the mountain, stirring only things that grow on its surface; not touching its foundation. Or yet, once more: as the fleeting clouds to the sun;—the biggest and blackest may roll over its disc, but touches it not—may obscure its brightness for a moment, but quenches not a ray. It is destined to shine with more or less luminousness for ever in the soul.

III. GOD'S BENIGNITY IS A FACT EVER BEFORE THE EYE

OF MAN'S BIBLICAL FAITH. Assuming the divinity of the scriptures, we have here brought under our notice a new and an extraordinary manifestation of Divine goodness. "Herein," says the apostle, "is love." "Herein"—in the disclosures of mediatorial mercy—as if he had said, All the streams of goodness seem here to meet in a majestic confluence.

The Bible reveals the wonderful goodness of God as doing three things:—

First. *As conferring blessings of the most transcendent character.* The material blessings, which stream with unceasing flow from the fountain of Divine goodness upon the sentient creation, are great; too great in number, variety, and magnitude, for any finite intelligence to estimate. But the Bible regards them only as faint symbols of that goodness which it reveals. The showers that water the earth, and revive the world; the river which blesses all "in its winding way;" gives fruitfulness to whole countries, and bears the wealth of nations on its bosom; Canaan in its palmy days, and Eden in its prime; the light of the glorious heavens robing the universe in beauty, and wakening it into song; are all used as emblems of the richer blessings which the scriptures unfold. These blessings are for *souls*—reasoning, God-reflecting, deathless souls, for whom these heavens were spread out and this earth was made. How great the worth of these blessings! They break the fetters of the spirit, and resuscitate its dormant power; they rekindle its lights and unseal its frozen fountains; they absolve its guilt, enthrone its conscience, reclaim it from its "prodigal" wanderings, and restore it to the arms of Infinite love; they rebuild its temple, and make the shekinah gleam, and the choir sing again; they translate it to "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Who shall tell of the glories of the skies? Who shall tell of the ever-increasing blessedness which the untold myriads of the saved shall enjoy through the progress of unnumbered ages? Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. These are blessings to remove

all the evils of the human world, and to fill it with piety and joy.

The Bible reveals the wonderful goodness of God—

Secondly. As conferring blessings of the most transcendent character *upon those who justly deserved his displeasure*. The blessings which God's goodness outpours in nature upon the lower creation fall on beings who act according to the powers and impulses which he has given them. They have not infringed his laws or insulted his authority. But it is not so with "the unsearchable riches" of his goodness, which are presented in the Bible. These are offered to creatures who have desecrated every power of their being, violated every moral law, abused every favour, and rebelled in heart and life. Here is a higher form of goodness than we can elsewhere see: goodness tenderly commiserating the miserable, generously smiling on the foe, sovereignly offering amnesty to the rebel, and heaven to the lost.

Again: the Bible reveals the wonderful goodness of God—

Thirdly. As conferring blessings of the most transcendent character upon those who justly deserved his displeasure, *by means of the most stupendous sacrifice*. What was the sacrifice? "God so loved the world"—the guilty, rebellious world—"that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." **GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON.** I pretend to no knowledge of the mysterious relation subsisting between the ABSOLUTE ONE and Jesus of Nazareth. I cannot penetrate the depth; my intellect bows before the mystery; but these terms give to me the highest idea of *affection*, and consequent *sacrifice*. How great was God's love to the world? Tell me how great was his love for his "only begotten Son," and I will attempt the answer; for it was *so* great that he gave his only begotten Son. He *spared* not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. He *spared* him not, did not keep him back in the embraces of his own love, used no suggestion to check his impulses of philanthropy, but "gave" him—"sent" him—"delivered him up," not to friends, but to enemies; not to a

life of ease, but to an existence of suffering and a death of agony ; not for a few, but *for us all*. That God should have bestowed any favour upon sinful creatures and enemies is a wonderful display of goodness, but that he should have made such a *sacrifice* “passeth knowledge.” God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were sinners, Christ died for the ungodly. Oh ! what a culmination of goodness is this ! Firmament rises above firmament : I cannot reach its blazing height. What an abyss of love is this ! Wave upon wave of wonder rolls beneath me, “deep calleth unto deep,” and I am lost. “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

This biblical vision of goodness is not, like the other two, *universal* ; it is limited to a very inconsiderable portion of mankind. There are but very few, comparatively, who have the Bible ; and but very few of those who have read it and believe it. The *true* Christian only has an eye to see and a heart to feel these “riches of goodness.” This goodness is the great thought of his mind, the theme of his converse, and the spirit of his song. “But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together, and made us sit together with Christ”—by grace ye are saved—“and hath raised us together, and made us sit together, in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus : that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.”

This subject is of the most *practical moment* to man. No fact within the whole range of thought is of such transcendent importance to man. That God *is*, is a great fact ; but, unless he is *good*, there is no glory in that fact to me. That he is all-mighty—all-knowing—eternal, are great facts about him ; but, unless he is good, they are repelling and crushing facts to me. His goodness is his glory. When Israel’s lawgiver, in ancient times, entreated him to show his glory, what was

the reply? Did he show the vastness of his universe, point out the extent of his possessions, the skill of his intellect, and the might of his arm? No. "I will cause my GOODNESS to pass before thee, said the Eternal;" as if he had said, *My glory is my goodness. Faith in his goodness is essential to spiritual union*; for does not the harmony of communities consist ever in common governing sympathies? and must not these sympathies, to render the harmony perfect and lasting, be directed ever to God? But what can awaken them except the *conviction* that he "is good?" Destroy this conviction in heaven, and you destroy the common governing sympathies; and with the destruction of these would come furious anarchy and wild confusion. Holy souls are united as planets are united, by a mutual attraction to a common centre. God's goodness is that centre, binding spirit to spirit and realm to realm. Unfallen and sainted spirits circle around this fact, and they are one. *Faith in his goodness is the necessary condition of spiritual culture.* Love to God is the soul of virtue, and the quickener of our spiritual faculties, and the spring of our holy deeds; but what but faith in his goodness can kindle in the heart this love for his character? *Faith in his goodness is the solving principle of all intellectual difficulties touching his government.* A thousand problems concerning the Divine procedure I meet with, on all hands, in my path of thought. The few with which I dare to wrestle master me; but my distracted and conquered spirit falls back upon the fact that God is good, and I have rest. *Faith in his goodness is the under-foundation of my hope.* When I think of my ignorance of to-morrow, and then muse upon the ages that await me, I feel appalled in the presence of the awful and mysterious future, and I can only bear the prospect as I confide in the goodness of God.

Oh! let me ever grasp this fast: it is my life. Let my spiritual universe—the whole sphere in which my thoughts move and sympathies play—be ever brightened with its glory, and vocal with its notes!

The Pulpit in the Family ;

OR,

A DOMESTIC HOMILY ON GOD-LIFE.

“ Being alienated from the life of God.”—EPHES. iv. 18.

ANOTHER hand has ably sketched the Divine Likeness, and here we propose to treat of the Divine Life. This life is pre-supposed in the likeness :—it is a living image, because it is the image of the living God. We may chisel a block of granite into a human form of most perfect shape and symmetry, or we may make the canvas instinct with the features of the friend whom we love, and yet in both we lack the great vital element. It is otherwise with the soul of man ; it can take on not a single lineament or line of the divine likeness until it is quickened and made alive. The life comes not with the assimilation, but the assimilation with the life. Let the soul only begin to live, and there is no conceivable reason why it should not take on the highest form of moral perfection. This perfection is inseparable from the fact of the interior life ; if the one exist, the other must be realized. If there be a living soul, there will be found in that soul holy love, and moral rectitude, and divine purity ; and in proportion to the depth of the vital element will be the sharpness and the distinctness of these grand outlines of spiritual character.

There is profound philosophy in the Pythagorean symbol—“ WEAR NOT THE IMAGE OF GOD ON YOUR RING.” Religion is not an outward and formal thing, but an inward and spiritual power. It is true that the inner life of the soul cannot exist without a corresponding outward visible manifestation, but it is no less true that there may be the outward profession without the inward reality. “ Out of the heart are the issues of life.” The religious man must have a heart within a heart, whose faith is rooted in truth, as the oak is

rooted in the soil, and which is hardy as the pine upon the mountains." Such a heart is "a crystal in its plain integrity," and no one will be bold enough to deny that a "rough diamond is better than the polished paste."

"A diamond,
Though set in horn, is still a diamond,
And sparkles as in purest gold!"

It is not with the exterior of the man we have to do, but with his inmost soul. A heart of corruption may be concealed within the purple and imperial robe. A man may clothe himself like an angel of light, and on his spirit there may not be a sheen of brightness. It is the state of the soul which determines the whole character and destiny of the man:—through the mere rag-garment of some poor unlettered peasant there may shine a virtue pure as light and beautiful as heaven. It is this which assimilates the man to divinity, and with the Divinity he is in deeper communion. Apollo is represented to have said that he dwelt with less pleasure in the resplendent heavens than in the souls of pious men, and is it too much to affirm that the ever-blessed God has not upon earth a more fitting abode than a pure heart? Though the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity; though He lays his essence on infinitude, and fills immensity with His presence; though all nature is a temple, from which there are ever rising the songs and the pæans of joyful praise; though the voices of numbers without number are for ever blending and filling the sanctuary of his more immediate presence with their sublime and glorious harmony; though the music of the universe is for ever floating around his throne and filling his ear; still his supreme delight is to dwell with the humble and the contrite spirit. He sees beauty and moral excellence where it is hid from the vulgar sight of man. Beneath a rough and homely exterior there are often to be found transcendant loveliness and worth. In the absence of all earthly distinctions, the soul may have taken on the highest likeness to God; and, in his sight, the rough-set diamond is more precious than the star that glitters in the crown of royalty.

The life of God in the soul is not to be resolved into a virtuous life. The ethics of Christianity are the sublimest and the truest which have been published to the world. We have only to compare any other code of morals to be at once impressed with the distance and the difference between the one and the other. The profoundest teachings of philosophy never reached the depth of the simplest sayings of Jesus Christ. The laws of no nation are equal in force to the statutes which he promulgated from the Mount of Beatitudes, or so conservative of the order and well-being of society. The proverbs and fireside words of no people embody so much practical wisdom as the every-day utterances of Incarnate Truth. The principles of Christianity are, without exception, influential and practical; and were these principles embodied in the life and character of those who profess them, the effect would be nothing less than transforming. As every thing which partakes the light of the sun is so far changed into itself, so every believer's nature should be so interpenetrated with divine truth as to be in himself its living and abiding impression. Nor could such a representation of Christianity fail to impress the world. This is the want and the claim of our age. Whatever may be the restlessness and the inquisitiveness of the human mind, men are not so much in quest of a sound theology, or an orthodox creed, as of a living, practical piety; and because the true embodiment of Christian principle is so rare and so uncertain a thing, they trample upon all creeds, and throw your theological dogmas to the winds. Conscious that they seldom come into contact with living men, they are tempted to deny the very highest form of life; rarely, if ever, feeling the warmer breath of that life passing over their spirit, they are strangers to its quickening power, and resolve it into anything but its true source. This may be an age of scepticism and of doubt, but the guilt lies with the Church of God. Men have been loud in their demand for life and reality, and they have found little else than show and sham. They believe, and rightly, that Christianity is not a thing in a book—not something made up.

of words and sentences, but of living principles and of living acts. They do not deny that the book may be the record of Christianity as it came out in the life and teaching of the Saviour and his Apostles, but they are loud and imperative in their demand for its counterpart in its avowed disciples. The strongest logic and the best-constructed argument will avail nothing in the absence of the living demonstration; they will be satisfied with nothing short of the actual embodiment of that which we profess. A Christianity which has its outcoming in the every-day walks and doings of its professors, is the only proof which will carry conviction to the heart of an unbelieving world; it is the grand final argument for which all doubt is impatient, and for the lack of which infidelity is bold and insulting.

It follows that virtue is inseparable from the life of God, though care must be had not to confound it with the life itself. The virtue does not give birth to the life, but the life gives existence and reality to the virtue. The one is the root and the other is the growth. Nor is the fact to be overlooked that the more replete the life the more abundant will be the fruit. Life cannot be confined, and, in proportion to the depth and strength of the vital principle, will it seek a wider and a freer development. What is it that makes the rose-bud burst into blossomed beauty, and fill the air with its refreshing fragrance, but an exuberance of life? And so it would be in the religious development of every individual Christian, if he were but a true and living man: his interior life would seek an outward expression—action would take the place of profession, and mighty deeds would throw the most cherished forms into far distance. Formalism is always indicative of a low degree of vitality, and it is only as the life rises that we can have the richer and the riper fruits of practical piety.

Life in God is something more than mere divine existence. As the Living One, there must be in his nature that in which his own infinite and eternal mind can ever repose with fixed and unchangeable satisfaction. The mere fact of being is not, and cannot be, commensurate with our idea of perfect blessed-

ness. That such blessedness is inseparable from his being we do not deny, but being and blessedness are not interchangeable terms, even in relation to God, except so far as they both express the highest and most absolute moral perfection. It may be an error ever to speak of God apart from the attributes by which he is distinguished, or to think that these attributes are something distinct and separable from his nature; but certain it is, that did not his nature include within itself every possible excellence and perfection, it could not be that we should conceive of him as the ever-blessed God. If he himself be life, the life partakes the nature of light—the vitality is inseparable from the purity, and both the purity and the vitality have their completeness in love. Benevolence is the very essence and fulness of the divine character:—it is this which so mellows and modifies the eternal light as to make it visible to every pure created eye: and this it is which converts the divine life into one sunny and ever-flowing fountain of blessedness, whose waters are not only adequate to the satisfaction and joy of God himself, but necessarily equal to the filling up of every nature derived from his power and dependent on his bounty.

The subject rises in importance. It now appears that the life of God in the soul can mean nothing less than the soul being first quickened by the great living Spirit, and then transformed into his likeness. Holiness and love were the grand primal elements in the original moral constitution of man: pure in the last recesses of his mind, his heart thrilled and throbbed with holy affection. These he lost through sin. Having ceased to love—having withdrawn his heart and his affections from God—he immediately fell from moral rightness or rectitude of character. Away from the Centre of light, his active thinking faculties became more and more obscured, while the loss or the absence of knowledge was followed by a corresponding deadness of feeling, or of moral sensibility. To bring back these two essential elements to man, or rather to lift man into them, is the one immediate end of the great remedial plan. In being created anew, he is

created in righteousness and true holiness. Sin must no longer have the ascendancy in his nature ; if it cannot be destroyed, it must yet be subdued and kept in subjection ; and with the subjugation of sin must come inward purity. In this moral purity is the root of moral rectitude. There can be no righteousness apart from holiness. If sin had not entered and disturbed the universe of God, everywhere we should have found ourselves in the midst of harmony, order, and love : nor can the harmony be restored on earth otherwise than by making all things new. It was as the Author of this second creation that the Saviour came. The revealed end of his mission and mediation is to reconcile all things which are in heaven, and which are on earth, and this by bringing all back into indissoluble union with God. Reconciliation to Him renders certain our union with every portion of his moral and universal creation. One with Him, we are one with them ; and this union rests on a basis which insures for it a deathless perpetuity.

In this great remedial scheme we have the highest and most definite expression of divine love ; nor can we be at a loss to understand why the gospel should come to us as a revelation of infinite benignity and mercy. Love is the quickening principle of divine life in the soul ;—it is this which acts upon the deepest springs of thought and feeling, and, coming into immediate contact with the heart, draws it as by the power of a heavenly attraction out of its own sinfulness and selfishness, and brings it into communion with God, who is life, and who only can impart the vital principle to the soul. The attractive force of love no earthly words can express ; its influence in the most common relations of this lower world is all but incalculable. How unutterable and how infinite, then, must be its power as it exists in its concentration and integrity in the Divine Nature ! Into this centre the soul must be drawn before it can be conscious of the life of God, and, once brought within its mighty influence, the interior life will rise and advance till perfected in sinless rectitude and quenchless love.

Is not life a reality ? It is not in the soundness of a man's

creed, nor in the fire and blaze of an outward profession, nor in that refined morality on which so many pique and plume themselves, that we must seek this vital element, but in a true heart. The life should, indeed, be the index to the soul. We should be able to determine, with the nearest approach to certainty, what is a man's real state from his every-day walk and conversation; but seeing that, in adopting this test, we are subject to every species of imposture, we have no alternative but to insist upon holy love and moral rectitude as the two essential elements of divine life, and to show that this life has its principles—fixed and immutable—of progression and development. In other words, if we cannot reason from the outward act to the inward state, we are free to argue from the principles of the inner life to the practice of the outer man. There are thousands, and thousands more, whose Christianity seems to be a thing without law. The lowest form of life around has its principles of progress and perfection—certain fixed and inflexible laws according to which the life is developed; while in the spiritual world of not a few all is confusion and chaos. Nothing seems reduced to order; or if light has penetrated the o'erbrooding darkness, we still lack all those higher modes and manifestations of life which are indicative of a settled and all-perfect arrangement. In relation to the Christianity of such, we may say—in words borrowed from a writer on the other side of the great waters—that “the measurement, and almost the only measurement, of its vitality is excitation—temporary emotion. It is driven downward and upward, backward, forward, and transversely, by the blind impulse of the emotional power; so that if we seek it here—supposing it has a fixed principle of movement, which will help to designate where it is—it is gone somewhere else; and if we seek it somewhere else, it has already altered its position. The true hidden life, refusing to be characterized by the fatal mark of inconstancy, has cast anchor in God, and its principles are the strong cable which hold it there. This is one thing which the Church of God are called upon to learn more fully—that the true life of God in the soul has its prin-

ciples—principles founded in wisdom—principles fixed and inflexible.”

This important subject may be best summed up in a series of simple and definite propositions:—

That wherever the soul is quickened into the life of God, there is a progressive assimilation to the divine likeness. Inward purity is seldom, if ever, perfected by a single act: beginning in mental and moral illumination, it is gradually, yet positively, carried on in the soul till the moment of her introduction into the state of perfected and glorified being.

That in the degree in which the soul is purified and transformed is the moral rectitude of the character. Holiness cannot but express itself in rightness. As the inner and deeper springs of action are purified, there will be the sanctity and the elevation of the life. To love holiness for the sake of its own inherent and unchangeable nature, is a species of philosophy which lifts the man infinitely above all human maxims and selfish calculations, and teaches him to perfect his personal purity or righteousness in the fear of God. He purifies himself, even as Christ is pure; and knowing the force and moral fitness of whatsoever things are true and honest, just and pure, lovely and of good report, these things he does, and in these he delights after the inner man.

That the root of this holiness and rectitude must be sought in pure love. To know God we must love him, and in the degree in which we love him shall we seek to be conformed to his glorious image. If we have been drawn, by the power of redeeming love, to himself, and if our hearts are filled with supreme affection to him, we are then in the true state for receiving higher and holier impressions. It is only as pure love in us rises on her own bright and beautiful wing, and flies from our heart to find a home in the heart of God, that He breathes into us his own life, and that we become conscious of a vitality truly divine.

That if, in very deed, we be the subjects of an interior divine life, then this life will ever seek its source and fountain in deeper and nearer communion with God. Life in us is

derived, and not original; and to have this life preserved, matured, and perfected, we must rise into its eternal and inexhaustible Spring. Though found on the earth, it comes from no such low ground. It rises infinitely above the sphere of the created and dependent, and has its source and fulness in God; and to enjoy it in all its promised plenitude and blessedness, we must enter into fellowship with his living Spirit. It is in such communion that he vouchsafes all holy and vital influence, and gradually draws the soul up into all the life and joy of a sinless immortality.

That the possession of this interior life is indicative of a higher religious consciousness, while the consciousness, again, points to that sacred and intimate union into which the soul has entered with God through the mediation of his Son. In no words borrowed from earth is it possible to express the depth of the Christian consciousness; and, however a scoffing world or a formal church may object to the doctrine of divine union, it follows as a sequence, that if the soul partake the life of God, it must be one with Him. He dwells in man, and man dwells in Him, and this union is formed for eternity.

That this inward life having its laws of progress and development, we are justified in looking for the highest moral excellence and spiritual perfection in those who are the subjects of it. If the principle within is to be expressed or embodied, in action without, then the life ought to be formed on the model of Christ. He is the great Exemplar of all virtue—the perfect Pattern of all goodness. We must drink into his spirit; we must walk in his steps.

Such is the life of God in man. It is nothing feigned, nothing fictitious, but a divine reality; nor can it be sought in any thing exterior to the man, but rather in the farthest depth of his soul. It is in him as a well of waters, ever gushing up in purity and goodness, in self-forgetting love and corresponding devotedness of character. If this be true, it becomes every one to see to it, that he is not substituting a profession of religion for religion itself—the letter that killeth

for the Spirit that maketh alive. It is not the semblance of life that is wanted, but the true life in its force, and fulness, and energy. Alienation from this life is the soul in a state of moral and spiritual estrangement from God, without light or love—the understanding darkened—the heart impure—the affections withdrawn, and diverted to other objects—the feelings and the sensibilities benumbed—the whole soul sunk down into the sensuous and the earthly. The proof of man's fall is to be found in man himself, and from himself his recovery can never spring. He needs a Helper and a Redeemer. Already the Saviour is at his side, and through Him there is no one but may rise into all the freedom and joy of divine life here, and partake this life in the world to come, in purity, perfection, and glory.

ROBERT FERGUSON, LL.D.

Ryde.

Germs of Thought.

Analysis of Homily the Sixty-second.

“For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.”—Rom. ix. 17, 18.

POWERFULLY does Paul, in this chapter, argue down the narrow *predestinarianism* of the Jew. In predestination, in its broad and true sense, our apostle, in common with the great thinkers of all ages, believed: it is a doctrine which every philosopher reads on every page of the great book of nature. The Jews, to whom this epistle was directed, held it, however, in a very contracted and dangerous sense. They concluded that, *being the lineal descendants of Abraham, they were predestinated to the mercy of God*. The “Jew had Abraham to be his father,” and in virtue of that connexion, he concluded

his election to everlasting life. This was his fatal error: self-righteousness, national arrogance, warrings with Christianity, and many other such evils, which blacken the page of his history, sprang from this. This argumentative method of combating this dogma pursued by the apostle, from the first to the eighteenth verses of this chapter,* may be briefly stated as follows:—

First. *He assures them, at the outset, of the deep interest he felt in them, and of the high estimation which he had formed of their privileges.* He solemnly asseverates his heart—"heaviness and continual sorrow" for them; he tells them that at one time he felt a deep hatred to Christianity, and wished himself "accursed"—separated—"from Christ;"† so that he could thoroughly understand the Jewish feelings in opposing this system, of which he was now an earnest advocate. He then proceeds to catalogue their high privileges: he speaks of them as those to whom "pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenant, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises," &c. Now, there was remarkable dialectic skill in thus preparing his way for an attack upon their master-prejudice. All persons, whatever their opinions, would be disposed to listen, at any rate, to one who thus felt such a deep interest in them, possessed such a thorough knowledge of their history, and entertained such a high appreciation of their privileges.

Secondly. *He affirms that God did not dispense his mercy on the principle of patriarchal descent.* "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel"—all have not been incorporated into the Jewish commonwealth, and blessed by Heaven with the peculiar privileges of that commonwealth, who are the descendants of Israel: "neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they the children of Abraham;" a repetition, we presume, of the same idea: as if the apostle had said, Had it

* For remarks on some of the following verses, see *Homilist* No. 10.

† The verb "could wish" is in the imperfect tense, and refers not to the apostle's present, but his past state of mind.

been true that God had blessed *all* the descendants of Abraham with the same great theocratic blessings, there might be some ground for your belief that you would be saved because of your patriarchal descent; but this is not the case; they are not of Israel—theocratic Israel—which are of Israel. The apostle proceeds to sustain this general statement by two well-known facts in their history: the one is the case of Ishmael, and the other of Esau. The former was as truly the son of Abraham as was Isaac, and the latter as truly the son of Isaac as was Jacob, but both of them and their posterities were consigned *not beyond the pale of salvation*, but beyond the theocratic realm of the Messianic line. In the presence of these facts, how absurd would their dogma seem!

The apostle proceeds to state—

Thirdly. *That God's mercy is ever bestowed on the principle of sovereignty alone.* This he illustrates in two ways:—First. *By God's declaration to Moses:* “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” This language does not mean either of the four following things:—*That he does not show mercy to all men*; this would be contrary to fact. Nor *that he gives to some favours which he does not bestow on others.* This is true—true with regard to natural endowments and external advantages—but this is not *the truth* here. Nor *that he bestows all his mercies irrespective of conduct.* This is *always* true of existence, with all its *native* attributes and talents, *sometimes* true of temporal circumstances, but *never* true of mental and spiritual excellence. Nor *that he is disposed to save all.* This would be contrary both to his positive assurances and remedial measures. But it means simply *that the reason of mercy is ever in himself*, and not in the creature; that all mercy streams from the freest impulses of his own nature: and if there be a God in the universe, this must ever be true of him, whether we like it or not. “So, then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.” This is the conclusion, from the Divine declaration which he quoted. The verse does not mean that

men ought not to *will* and *run* to seek salvation, or that they will, or ever can, be saved without the willing and running; but that the cause of their salvation is not in their willing and running, but in the free heart of God's love. That Divine mercy is ever bestowed on the principle of sovereignty he illustrates, secondly, by *God's declaration to Pharaoh*. "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh," &c.; as if the apostle had said, You know, Pharaoh, the notorious enemy of your forefathers: God's mercy is so free that it even visited *him*, raised him up from affliction, in order to show forth his saving power in him, "and to manifest his name in all the earth."

SUBJECT:—*Pharaoh; or, an Impenitent Sinner in Relation to God's Mercy.*

This passage leads us to consider—

I. AN IMPENITENT SINNER AS RAISED UP FROM AFFLICTION BY THE MERCY OF GOD. If you refer to the occasion on which the words here quoted were addressed to Pharaoh, you may save yourself from the perplexities which an examination of the conflicting opinions of dogmatic annotators and mere word-loving critics would assuredly produce. The language occurs in Exodus (ix. 16), and the import is obviously as follows:—Pharaoh and his people had just been visited with the distressing plague of "the boils breaking out with blains upon man and upon beast." Jehovah condescends to remove this affliction, and to restore the monarch once more to his health. It is in relation to this *recovery from affliction* that God, through Moses, says, "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." The expression, therefore, "I have raised thee up," when interpreted by the context, manifestly means, *I have restored thee from this affliction*. It was *mercy* that was dealing all the while with this man, through the moral and miraculous ministries of Moses and Aaron. Why else was his proba-

tionary day lengthened out after the first warning had been delivered? Why else were there so many and varied influences employed to subdue his rebellious will? Why else was he not crushed on his first interview with Moses, when, with a blasphemous daring, he said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." With one volition of the Almighty mind he would have ceased to be. What hindered that volition? Nothing but mercy. It was mercy that afflicted this man time after time, and mercy that "raised" him up again.

This is but a striking example of God's ordinary dealing with all sinners *here*: they are not living under the reign of justice, but mercy. Mercy afflicts and restores. They live by mercy. This fact is testified (1) *by the scriptures*; (2) *by every sinner's consciousness*.

The passage leads us to consider—

II. AN IMPENITENT SINNER AS MORALLY IMPRESSED BY THE MERCY OF GOD. "That I might show my power in thee." There are two kinds of power—*physical* and *moral*. These differ not in *source*, but in *object*: each has its source in mind. All power is in mental impulse. But their *objects* differ: the one acts on matter and the other on intelligent natures. Starting from the same source, they diverge into two essentially distinct regions as spheres of action. The *moral*, or the power which influences rational beings, is the *superior*. Of all the creatures on earth man alone can wield this. The question is, which of these powers did Jehovah purpose showing forth in Pharaoh? Undoubtedly the moral. His physical power could be seen far more gloriously in earthquakes and storms, in heaving oceans, revolving stars, and, indeed, in all the ten thousand operations of nature, than in alternately afflicting and restoring the *poor frail* body of Pharaoh, or in any of the wonders wrought on the banks of the Nile. Besides, man does not require a higher manifestation of physical power than he has everywhere around him.

It was *moral* power—power over the monarch's mind and heart—that the Almighty now sought to exercise. "That I might show my power *IN* thee." It was visible everywhere *out* of him. But why show this power *in* him? It must have been either to promote *holiness* in him or *sin*. There can be no third supposition. Which was it? Who will dare say the latter? It was to turn Pharaoh from the error of his ways, and to make him a better man, that this power was employed; and this is ever God's aim with the impenitent sinner. "Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with light of the living." There were two things connected with this Divine power *in* Pharaoh which always characterize its operations:—First. *It was sin-convicting*. Several times, when this power was working *in* him, did he exclaim, "I have sinned this time: the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked." Cain, Belshazzar, Felix, Judas, and others, have felt the same when this power has been working in them. This power can roll thunders and kindle lightnings over the sinful soul, of which the most terrific that have ever visited the outward world are but as the faintest echoes and the dimmest signs. The great aim of God in thus making his power bear on the sinful world is "to convince it of sin, of righteousness," &c. Another thing, in the case of Pharaoh, which always characterizes the operations of this power, is, secondly, *that it was resistible*. Pharaoh resisted it. It can always be resisted; it would not be *moral*, and man would not be *responsible*, were it otherwise. We cannot resist the physical power of God, but we can his moral: he has given us the capacity to do so. The existence of this capacity is the greatness of our being; the using of this capacity against the moral influence of our Maker is our sin, degradation, and woe. "*Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.*"

The passage, moreover, leads us to consider—

III. AN IMPENITENT SINNER IS STRIKINGLY MANIFESTING THE MERCY OF GOD. "That my name might be declared

throughout all the earth." The name of God is frequently employed in the scriptures as expressive of goodness and mercy. Thus Jesus seems to have employed it when he said, "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." God's dealing with Pharaoh declares, throughout all the earth," and throughout all times too, three facts concerning God's mercy:—First. *That it is longsuffering.* How long the Almighty condescended to strive with this man! Secondly. *That it is earnest.* See how numerous and varied the means employed,—argument upon argument, and miracle upon miracle. In all these methods mercy seemed to say, "How shall I give thee up, Pharaoh? Thirdly. *That it is terminable.* Mercy at last deserted this man, took her wing, and never came again. She delivered him up to justice, and you know his fate. I find no more significant and impressive commentary on the following passage than God's dealing with Pharaoh: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner," &c.

This passage leads us to consider—

IV. AN IMPENITENT SINNER AS INCIDENTALLY HARDENED BY THE MERCY OF GOD. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." This is Paul's conclusion from God's declaration to Pharaoh. It is nothing more than a strong method of asserting the principle which he so often repeats in this chapter—namely, that the *reason* of mercy is not in the creature, but in the Creator; that he does everything after the counsel of his own will.

It is probable that the word "hardeneth" was suggested to the apostle by the effort which the divine ministry of Moses and Aaron had upon the heart of Pharaoh. In the history of the Egyptian monarch, the *hardening* of his heart is more than once referred to *himself*, as well as to his Maker. How did God *harden* Pharaoh's heart? First. *Not by intention.* This is contrary to the purpose stated, which was, as we have

seen, to “show” his sin-convicting and soul-saving power in him ; and this, too, is repugnant to all our highest and most truthful notions of God’s purity and benevolence. Secondly. *Not by fitness of instrumentality.* Examine the means employed, and you will not fail to discover a wonderful adaptation to an opposite end—anadaptation to awaken every faculty, and to stir the deepest sympathies of the soul. Thirdly. *Not by any positive agency for the purpose.* It does not require that God should put forth any agency to harden a sinner. He is hardened, and harder he will become, if he be left alone. Divine agency is required not to harden, but refine—not to destroy, but to save. How, then, did he harden Pharaoh’s heart? In the same way as he hardens the heart of that man who year after year listens to the most powerful sermons, and still remains in his sin. Pharaoh’s hardening is nothing extraordinary—no strange event in the history of the world. Would it were so! It is a *typal* fact. In every age there have been numbers heart-hardened under the most potent influences of MERCY. The ministry of Moses and Aaron is not the only ministry that had a Pharaoh; the ministry of the prophets had its Pharaohs; the ministry of Christ had its Pharaohs; the ministry of the apostles had its Pharaohs: our ministry has its Pharaohs. The very means that mercy designed and fitted to save, harden some. The gospel proves the savour of death unto death, as well as of life unto life. This solemn fact is suggestive of two things:—(1) *The native energy of soul.* There is power in the human mind to get good out of evil, and evil out of good: it can transmute food into poison, and poison into food. It is made to be not the servant, but the sovereign, of circumstances. The fact suggests (2) *the moral perverseness of soul.* Instead of using this power to subordinate evil to good, it does so to subordinate good to evil—makes mercy a destroyer.*

* We regret exceedingly that our space has necessitated us to treat this subject, which would seem to call for amplification, with so much baldness and condensation.

This subject addresses itself to many characters. Art thou, my friend, one of those who claim a connexion with that "little flock" who, like the old Jew, believe that mercy is *predestinated* for them and theirs alone, and that regard all beyond the precincts of their little synagogue and sect as those in whom Heaven feels no interest? Look at Pharaoh, and abjure thy narrow notions. See mercy pleading and working with a man who dared the Almighty, and trampled on the rights of his chosen people. Or art thou one of those despairing ones, deeming thyself as placed beyond the pale of mercy by thy sins? Look at Pharaoh, and be encouraged. Though a monster in crime, mercy strove long and hard with him. Or art thou one of those who, under the ministry of God's servants, are often excited to form religious resolutions, only to be broken the next week? Look at Pharaoh, and take the warning. He often repented and resolved; and by resisting moral impressions and breaking resolutions became hardened, and was damned by that mercy that sought to save him. Let Pharaoh stand up as a beacon on the rock of all times, to warn every gospel hearer whom mercy deigns to visit of the dangers of resisting her impressions, and standing out against her entreaties.

Analysis of Homily the Sixty-third.

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."—**MATT. xii. 43—45.**

"**DEMONIACAL** possession," whether an actual occurrence or a mere superstitious idea, was regarded as a *fact* by the Jews, and often treated as such by our great **EXEMPLAR** and **LORD**.*

* Those who would see the two sides of this question presented fairly and succinctly, should consult an article on the subject, by the Rev. J. F. Denham, M.A., in the "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature."

If a fiction, it had all the influence of a *fact* upon the Jewish mind, and never did Jesus seek to counteract its force. Popular errors, so long as they are truly believed, will serve the purpose of illustration in teaching better than real truths that are not generally accepted. Be it fiction or fact, it does sometimes admirably bring out, in bold and impressive form, some of the great practical truths of Christianity.

See, for example, the picture before us. There stands a man whose bosom, a short time ago, was the home of a vile demon. The dark spirit is, however, now expelled, and is gone abroad into his wonted haunts "seeking rest," and the man is free alike from his presence and his influence: the place he occupied is "empty, swept, and garnished." But it is not for long; the evil one has no rest in those "dry places." He determines to return to his old abode. Anticipating a difficulty in regaining his lost possession, he takes with him "seven other spirits more wicked than himself." They approach the old dwelling, and instead of finding it as they expected—guarded and fortified—they find every gate open, no sentinel on the watch, all empty, and prepared for their reception. "They enter in and dwell there;" and now "the last state of that man is worse than the first."

Whose horrid portrait is this which Jesus draws? It is that of the Jewish nation. The departure of the evil spirit refers to some reformation which had taken place in their history. Perhaps the reference is to that revolution which occurred after their emancipation from Babylon, when the demon of idolatry seems to have left them; or that which occurred in the days of John the Baptist, when the demon of apathy was exorcised by the righteous fulminations of the great reformer. And the return of the evil spirit with "seven other spirits" expresses some great moral relapse, when the impulses of evil would work more fearfully and powerfully in them, and show themselves in some more terrible form. It may be that the allusion is to the stupendous tragedy of the crucifixion. Truly a sevenfold force of evil appeared in that miracle of sin.

SUBJECT:—*Defective Reformation.*

I. THAT A DEFECTIVE REFORMATION CONSISTS RATHER IN THE DISPOSSESSION OF SOMETHING WRONG THAN IN THE IMPORTATION OF WHAT IS RIGHT. “The unclean spirit is gone out” of the man, and there is a *visible* improvement. The house is swept of its filth, and garnished with many ornaments; but this is all. An *evil* spirit is gone from the man, but no *good* spirit has come in its place. Where is the heavenly occupant for whom the house was originally built?—the spirit of love for eternal truth and goodness; where is it? This man represents a reformation by no means uncommon. We find evil spirits leaving men, but no good spirits taking up their place. (1) The “unclean spirit” of *barbarism* may go out from man. People that were once gross, loathsome, and savage—the mere creatures of brute instinct—become enlightened in intellect, prolific in invention, and refined in manners. *Civilization* sweeps the house of social impurities, garnishes it with outward moralities and artistic beauties but it is still “empty” so far as moral worth is concerned. To be able to read Homer, and to trace the logical steps of Euclid; to travel by steam, and make electricity convey our thoughts; to maintain outward order by laws, and make machinery save our muscles and our limbs; are advantages which accrue to the civilized world by the expulsion of the old barbaric spirit. But let us not overrate these; they are not *virtues*; they co-exist with a morally empty soul. Perhaps the civilized world is *morally* as “wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,” as many parts of uncultured heathen-land. (2) The “unclean spirit” of a *false theology* may go out from man; a country may renounce Polytheism, or Islamism, or Popery; and a correct theoretic system of faith may sweep the house of all idolatries, sacerdotalties, and such like abominations, and garnish it with the forms of Christian theism; and the house may still be “empty” in a moral sense. Of what advantage to the *moral soul* of man is *nominal* Protestantism compared

with Popery, or *nominal* Christianity compared with heathenism? (3) The "unclean spirit" of *intemperance* and *profanity* may go out from man. The drunkard may be so impressed with the evils of intemperance that he may banish the demon, and sweep his house of the disgusting habits of intoxication, and garnish himself with the forms of sobriety; and the profane man may abandon his blasphemous language, cease to desecrate the ordinances of Heaven, sweep his house of all odious irreverences, and garnish it with the forms of piety; and yet, in both cases, the house may be left empty, entirely unoccupied with any virtuous and religious emotions.

Such are the spurious and defective reformations. They are of no real service to man as an offspring of God, a citizen of the universe, a candidate for eternity. Let a man put away all mere intellectual and outward evil from him; let every demon of error and habit depart; let his conversation and conduct be swept of all that could offend the eye of the most refined spectator; nay, let him be garnished with such external attributes as would command the esteem, and even admiration, of society; still, if the "house" be "empty"—if the "Spirit of Christ" is not in it—his reformation is radically defective and morally worthless. All his outward excellences are but as flowers about a corpse, serving to hide a little the hideous, and to relieve the noisome from the spectator, but leaving to death his undisputed sway. In true reformation the evil spirit goes out, because the spirit of goodness has entered. The new life infused expels the old spirit; and the man throws off the old, as trees throw off their foliage, by the rising force of a new life. True reformation is like the moulting of the "fowls of heaven:" the old feathers give way to a lovelier plumage by the inward working of a fresh supply of vital force.

The picture suggests—

II. THAT SUCH A DEFECTIVE REFORMATION IS NO GUARANTEE AGAINST FUTURE DEGENERACY. "I will return to my house from whence I came out," &c. There are four

circumstances suggested which will render the subject of this defective reformation liable to a fearful relapse :—First. *The moral emptiness of the soul.* The soul was left unoccupied ; there was nothing there to guard its rights, interest its sympathies, or engage its powers. The true spirit was not there to “lift up a standard” against the enemy. An empty mind—a mind without a great affection, thought, and purpose—will always be assailable by the enemy at every point. There is but one thing in the universe that can fill up a soul, and that is *supreme love to God.* This will so occupy it as to allow no place for aught besides. This affection, like fire, consumes everything opposed to its own nature, and transmutes all into its own essence. It acts as the great Redeemer acted in the Temple of old—expels all those buyers and sellers who desecrate the holy place. Another thing suggested, which renders the subject of this defective reformation liable to relapse, is, secondly, *the constant restlessness of evil.* This unclean spirit is represented as “walking through dry places seeking rest, and findeth none.” There is no repose in evil. It is like the troubled sea : the mind under its influence is never at rest, nor ever can be. An ejected spirit, like the wild beast disappointed of its prey, prowls about the creation with heightened appetite and quickened speed. Satan is represented as a roaring lion ; as going up and down the earth ; as the enemy, who steals clandestinely into the fields, scatters tares, and thus frustrates the plans and blights the prospects of the moral husbandman. Another thing suggested, which renders the subject of this defective reformation liable to a relapse, is, thirdly, *the disposedness of the spirit to it.* The unclean spirit, on its return, instead of finding the house bolted and barred, found it “swept and garnished” as if awaiting his return. Partial reformations always have their *reactions.* The man who abandons any vice to which he has been addicted, from pride, fear, expediency, or any other motive not virtuous in itself, is only preparing his heart for the *return* of the evil spirit. Any change accomplished from any motive save love to God, is but the giving up of one sin for another ;

is but one evil spirit casting out another. Fourthly. There is yet another thing suggested which renders the subject of this defective reformation liable to a relapse, and that is, thirdly, *the vast resources of evil*. "Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself." The agents of evil in this world are far more numerous than those of virtue. The restless spirit of evil can always muster not merely "seven," but seven thousand, emissaries to help it in its work. Whilst virtue, on this planet, has but its units, vice has its millions.

III. THAT THE DEGENERACY WHICH FOLLOWS SUCH A REFORMATION LEAVES THE SUBJECT IN A WORSE CONDITION THAN EVER. "And the last state of that man is worse than the first." First. *His guilt is augmented*; secondly, *his susceptibility to holy motives is deadened*; thirdly, *his obstructions to a thorough change are increased*.

This subject brings out several valuable thoughts to view. Does it present *a true test of character*? It shows that moral worth is not in negatives, but positives; not in the abdication of vices, but in the cultivation of virtues; not in the mere ejection of a bad spirit, but in the reception of the good. True worth is the good expelling the bad, and filling up the soul. Does it not also present *a true explanation of apostacy*? What is technically called "falling from grace," seems to me nothing more than a soul that had once swept itself of some vices, and appeared clean for a time, receiving back others in its place: it is the *reaction* of a temporary dormant evil, not the *extinction* of positive good. Does it not, moreover, present *the true method of reformation*? What instrument can effect a true reformation in man? Manifestly that only which can infuse into the soul a new disposition—fill it with love to God, the very spirit of all goodness. There is but one *power* in society, one instrument in the world, but historically *has* done this, or that philosophically ever *can* do this, and that is CHRISTIANITY.

Analysis of Homily the Sixty-fourth.

“Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,” &c.—
MATT. xxvi. 36—46.

THE public life of Christ has ended now; he bids the world adieu, and retires. For upwards of three years he was seen performing stupendous miracles, and heard proclaiming transcendant truths, in the great theatre of public life. All eyes were on him, all minds were occupied with stirring thoughts, which he, by his wondrous deeds and more wondrous doctrines, had waked up; but now he withdraws into a little garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives, a short distance to the south of the Holy City. There, amidst the quiet trees, overshadowed by the silent hills, with the pale beams of the full moon falling coldly on his brow, he retires to solitary anguish and to private prayer. Mysterious are the sufferings which come upon him in this quiet retreat: it is “the hour of darkness” in his soul. Awful were the spiritual convulsions and battlings of this hour! What interests depended on it? God knows, and coming ages will reveal.

The agonies he now endured were *mental*. The mind, by its abstractions, creations, and anticipations, has the power to raise itself above the *consciousness* of physical pain: hence the martyr has sung joyously at the stake. But what can sustain a wounded spirit? There is no faculty to bear us above mental anguish. Man can flee from it no more than from himself; it surrounds his being like the circumambient air, which he must breathe or die. And these mental sufferings of Christ were the sufferings of *innocence*. The burnings of envy and revenge, the distractions of avarice, the disappointments of ambition, the recollection of past mis-

doings, the warrings of passion and principle, and the pangs of remorse, which make up the *mental* sufferings of the *guilty*, could not have been ingredients in his cup of woe; and yet his "soul was exceeding sorrowful." The passage before us gives us such a vision of our Saviour's conduct under his deep suffering as cannot fail to interest and instruct the thoughtful. Let us attend to it.

SUBJECT :—*Gethsemane; or, the Man-ward and God-ward Direction of the Soul in Sorrow.*

I. THE MAN-WARD DIRECTION OF THE SOUL IN SORROW. Urged by the *social* instincts of his nature, Jesus sought the presence and sympathy of his friends in this dark hour of sorrow. "And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee," &c. Having human nature, with all its sympathetic instincts, he wished his friends to stand by him in the dreadful crisis. If they could speak no cheering word, their very presence would serve to relieve the dreariness of the scene. *He, like all men, looked man-ward for help.* This is natural; this is right. Man is made to help man, is bound to help man. God frequently helps man through man. To look, therefore, to man for help is not wrong in itself. In Christ's appeal to man for help now, we discover three things in relation to man as a helper:—First. *The great frailty of man as a helper.* "And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them *asleep*," &c. They had spent the whole evening with him at the Passover, and now they were physically exhausted and could not watch. Our nature can bear but little; its energies are soon overtaken, and we are left without power to help our dearest friends. We discover, secondly, *the necessary qualification for man as a helper.* "Watch and pray," &c. *Watch*,—act the sentinel, look about you, observe the perils that threaten and the foes that surround; and *pray*,—look above you; ever realize your dependence upon God for guidance, protection, and support. Without this spiritual watching and devout prayer, man will

never be able to render true service to his fellow-man. We discover, thirdly, *the proper consideration due to man as a helper*. "The spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak." Where help is sought and not rendered, through physical infirmity, let us ever accept *the will for the deed*. Christ did so, and thus he ever acts. The spirit is everything.

II. THE GOD-WARD DIRECTION OF THE SOUL IN SORROW. Christ had, as all have, *religious* instincts as well as social, and hence he looked to God as well as to man. "He went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible," &c. There are three things in Christ's appeal to Heaven which characterize all true prayer:—First. *A definite object*. What did Jesus seek? "Let this cup pass from me." What was in that dreadful cup? It was something before which his holy nature recoiled with inexpressible horror. The ATONEMENT was in that cup: it contained the true panacea for diseased souls. All true prayer has ever a definite object. Another thing in Christ's appeal which ever characterizes true prayer is, secondly, *a true spirit*. "O my Father." It was an *earnest* spirit. Three times did he fall down and pray. It was a *submissive* spirit. "If this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done." "THY WILL BE DONE": this is the true inspiration of prayer. There is yet another thing in Christ's appeal which ever characterizes true prayer, and that is, thirdly, *a strengthening influence*. Luke states that "an angel appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him." After his prayer, all the terrific excitement seemed to pass away: the inner storm subsided, the clouds broke, and the sun shone: a halcyon calmness came over him, and his soul rose to an energy equal to his fate. He rose from his devotions with a new power, went to his drowsy disciples, and said, "Rise, let us be going;" and he began his way, with a firm and majestic step, to the cross.

A Gethsemane is before us all: into scenes of deep sorrow

and trial must all soon pass. The dark hour of death awaits us, and the bitter cup must be drunk. Our social nature may then urge us to look man-ward. Let us not expect too much even from the dearest and holiest friends; however willing their spirit, their "flesh is weak." Their disposition to help may be strong, but their capacity is ever feeble. May we turn God-ward in that hour—look to the everlasting hills for help. Up those benign heavens there is ONE whose eye sees through the darkest night, whose heart feels for all, and whose arm is mighty to save. May He befriend us then; commission some kind angel to descend and give us strength equal to our day!

Analysis of Homily the Sixty-fifth.

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God," &c.—1 COR. i. 22—25.

SUBJECT:—*Christianity Viewed in Three Aspects.*

I. AS ASSOCIATED WITH A GREAT FACT. "Christ crucified." This fact may be looked at, first, *historically*. As an historical fact, it is the most *famous, influential, and best authenticated*, in the annals of time. This fact may be looked at, secondly, *theologically*. It unfolds the *divine*; it rends the veil in the great temple of theological truth, and exposes the inmost and holiest sanctuary; it is a mighty *expression* of God's idea, government, and heart. This fact may be looked at, thirdly, *morally*. It is fraught with the most *quicken- ing, elevating, and sanctifying* suggestions.

Look at it—

II. AS ASSOCIATED WITH POPULAR OPINION. It was a *stumbling-block* to the Jew; it was *foolishness* to the Greek. It had not sufficient of the *gorgeous philosophical ritualism*

for the speculative and pedantic Greek, nor sufficient of the *gorgeous religious ritualism* for the sensuous and bigoted Jew. What is it in popular sentiment now? To the millions it is *nothing*. They have formed no idea of it; they do not think about it. To the sceptic it is a *fable*: to the formalist it is a *creed* to be repeated, and a ceremony to be attended to on certain occasions, and nothing more.

Look at it—

III. AS ASSOCIATED WITH CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS. “But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” The Christian sees the *highest wisdom* in a system which, in saving the sinner, does four things:—First, *manifests the righteousness of the insulted sovereign*; secondly, *augments the influence of moral government*; thirdly, *maintains intact all the principles of moral freedom*; and, fourthly, *develops, strengthens, and perfects*, all the original powers of the individual soul. He sees, too, the *highest power* in the difficulties it surmounts, the revolutions it effects, the deeds to which it stimulates, the hopes it inspires, and deep fountains of pleasure which it opens up. He FEELS that it is both wise and powerful.

What is Christianity to us? As a fact, there it is in the archives of humanity for ever independent of us; nothing will ever blot it out from the page of history. As a fact, though centuries old, it is more influential than ever. It will be a fact eternally. What is it to us? Is it folly and weakness, or is it wisdom and power? This is the question.

Analysis of Homily the Sixty-sixth.

“The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.”—PSA. xxxiii. 11.

SUBJECT:—*God's Thoughts.*

I. GOD HAS THOUGHTS. “The thoughts of his heart.” His thoughts are, first, *independent*—independent in their

origin—character—manifestation. Secondly. His thoughts are complete : they grasp the whole of a thing, and the whole of all things. Thirdly. His thoughts are unsuccessive : one thought does not start another, as in our case. Fourthly. His thoughts are harmonious, ours are conflicting.

II. GOD HAS THOUGHTS FOR HUMANITY. They are “to all generations.” His thoughts are not for a few men, nor even a few generations, but for *all* generations. Three things are necessary before humanity can get any benefit from his thoughts:—First. God must reveal them. Unless he express them, we shall never know them. He has expressed them. Secondly. There must be a capacity to appreciate them. Without this capacity the revelation is useless. The Bible is nothing to a brute. Man has this capacity ; he has a mind to take in the thoughts of the Infinite. Thirdly. There must be meditation. There may be the revelation and the capacity, but, unless there be study, God’s thoughts will be nothing to us. We cannot reach the great thoughts of a great man without study ; how, then, can we expect to attain the thoughts of God without it ?

III. GOD’S THOUGHTS FOR HUMANITY ARE PERMANENT. “The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever.” They are permanent, first, because they embody absolute truths. They will always be what they are ; they never *can* change. Secondly. They are permanent, because they will ever be congruous with the moral nature. They are to the moral nature what air and water are to the body, fitted for it and necessary to it. Without them it will die.

By these thoughts let us form our character. May God’s thoughts be the subjects, stimulants, and guides of *our* thoughts. May they be the sunny atmosphere in which our spirits live and breathe !

Analysis of Homily the Sixty-seventh.

"Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in; therefore came his father out, and intreated him. And he answering, said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment," &c.—LUKE xv. 25—32.

SUBJECT:—*The Elder Son; or, Technical Sainthood.*

THERE are three facts which stand out prominently in this passage:—First. *That the moral reclamation of souls is a source of delight to the infinite Father of spirits.* Indeed, this is the truth taught in the three parables of this chapter. The joy of the woman who found her lost piece of silver, of the shepherd who found his lost sheep, and of the father who presses to his bosom a long-lost son, are all intended to express the pleasure of the INFINITE in receiving lost souls. Another fact which stands out prominently in this parable is, secondly, *that in this delight the infinite Father wishes all his family to participate.* To the whole household the father says, "Let us eat, and be merry"; and he presses the elder son to join the circle, and partake of the joy. The shepherd who had found his sheep, the woman who had found her silver, and the father who embraced his lost son, call upon others to rejoice with them. And this expresses the great truth, that God wishes the universe to rejoice with Him in this event. The other fact which stands out prominently in this parable is, thirdly, *that there are professed members of his family who will not participate in the delight.* These are represented by the elder brother. "And he was angry, and would not go in." Who does this elder brother represent? Not angels, for they rejoice. With every conversion, they strike their harps in new and deeper notes of joy. Not true saints: their deepest cry is, "Let the people praise thee, O God!" &c. In Christ's

time the elder brother represented the proud and self-righteous Pharisee, who looked with envy and contempt upon the publicans who, under the ministry of Christ, pressed into his kingdom. But the elder brother is a type of a large class of character that have existed in connexion with the Church in all ages—the *technical saint*; the man who has the form of godliness, but not the power; who is alive to the letter, but dead to the spirit. There are three things which this elder brother develops which ever mark the history of all formal religionists.

I. A HEARTLESS INDIFFERENCE TO THE MORAL RECLAMATION OF A BROTHER. He “would not go in”; and more, he felt anger, and indulged in censure. There is a class of men who belong, more or less, to all churches; technical saints, who, whatever their professions, are manifestly indifferent to the conversion of souls. They do nothing. Feeling that their conduct is anomalous, they, when forced to an explanation, urge a defence on a variety of grounds. 1. Some urge a defence on *doctrinal grounds*. They say that conversion is the work of God, and we ought not, by our instrumentality, to endeavour to take it out of His hands. We do not deny its being the work of God. The Bible refers it to three agencies—the agency of the sinner himself, the agency of God, and the agency of the Christian. There is no contradiction here: the harvest is both the work of the husbandman, and the work of God, &c. 2. Some urge a defence on *ecclesiastical grounds*. It is the work of apostolically-ordained men. It is contrary to all ecclesiastical order for others to attempt it. Such is the language of cold *ecclesiasticism*. 3. Some urge a defence on *business grounds*. This is the case with thousands who would be ashamed to plead either *doctrine* or ecclesiastical proprieties. They have no time, they say, to seek the conversion of men. They talk about souls being of more value than the world, and yet not one hour in the week can they spare for the purpose of reclaiming them. Away with your hypocrisy, brother! Abjure your profession, or amend

your ways! Numbers who make this excuse labour in business, not for the necessities, or even comforts, of life, but for luxuries and artificialities; and thus they show that they care more for confection and finery than for souls.

Another feature which the elder son developed, which marks the history of technical sainthood, is—

II. AN EXAGGERATED ESTIMATE OF HIS OWN EXCELLENCES. “Lo, these many years do I serve thee.” Here is the Pharisean spirit, which always extols its own virtues, and “rates its morals high.” “I am not as other men,” &c. A mere technical saint always over-estimates his goodness. Indeed, it is *imaginary* merits that reconciles his conscience to his heartless life; and this spiritual *conceit* frequently develops states of mind similar to those which now came out in this elder son. Here is, first, *displeasure at the happy reception of a brother*. Instead of rejoicing at the return and happy reception of a brother, he was “angry.” *Envy*—the indwelling demon of selfish natures—kindled its hell-fires of anger in that breast of his, which should have glowed with blithe and heartsome love. Your technical saint, instead of rejoicing in the interest felt in a fresh convert, feels often a suppressed dislike; especially if it be in connexion with any other section of the Church than his own. Here is, secondly, *an irreverent discontent with the doings of a father*. “And he answering, said to his father, Lo, these many years,” &c. What a heartless and irreverent way to address a father, especially at a period when his heart was so full of inexpressible delight! Your technical saint has no profound reverence. He has devotion on his lip, but murmurousness in his soul. Here we have, thirdly, *a censorious reflection upon the faults of others*. “But as soon as this thy son was come, which hast devoured thy living with harlots,” &c. A reference to the faults of an erring brother, in this hour of his penitence, was not only bad taste, but worse feeling. It was the captiousness of a callous heart; it indicated a deadness to all true sentiment. The technical saint is characteristically censorious: he has no

mercy on the sins of others. Perhaps the critical tendency is always the strongest in the weakest brain. Certainly the censorious is always strongest in the basest heart. The greatest sinner is frequently the greatest censor. The Jeffreyses are always the most merciless judges.

Another thing which is here suggested in relation to a technical sainthood is —

III. A VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION FROM THE TRUE CIRCLE OF JOY. He “would not go in.” All were happy within. The father and the reclaimed son were happy, though their happiness flowed from different sources. All the domestics shared the joy. There were “music and dancing” in the house. All were joyous but this “elder son.” And why was he not happy? 1. Not because the scene was not adapted to yield it. The rich banquet is spread. There is the long-lost brother, whose heart, freed from the bitter sorrows and dread forebodings of years, bounds with inexpressible emotions of joy; there is the father, whose soul is too full for speech. Attentions, looks, and tears, take the place of words, and declare that his happiness is too great for utterance. Servants and neighbours catch the inspiration of the scene, and feel the ecstasy of joy. The house is full of “music and dancing.” There was everything, therefore, in the scene to make the elder brother happy—to touch every chord of his nature into music. 2. Not because he was not invited to participate in the scene. “Therefore came his father out, and entreated him.” How could he have refused the entreaties of such a father at such an hour. Why, then, was he excluded? “He was angry, and would not go in.” His own cold, selfish heart shut him out from all this joy. He was self-excluded from the joyous circle.

Thus it is ever with your technical saints: they are a murmuring and a discontented class. They have nothing but trials in the world—not they. They have no comfort in the church: religion to them is a burden on the back, beneath which they bow and groan—not a new life in the heart, causing them to

look sun-ward, and mount up as on the eagle's wings. There is happiness around them. Nature spreads out her banquet under the sunny banner of love, the great Father is happy, and his servants rejoice, and the house is filled with "music and dancing;" but the earth is a "wretched land" to them; it yields them no supply. The church spreads out her banquet—a feast of fat things, of wines on the lees, well-refined. Returned prodigals are there, and the happy Father is there, delighted servants are there, and the house is full of "music and dancing"; but their cry is, that "the ways of Zion do mourn." *Happiness ever depends upon the state of the heart.* It cannot stream into a man; it must well up from his own soul.

I know not of a greater evil than this *technical sainthood*. Bold infidelity is bad; open profligacy is bad; but this technical sainthood, for many reasons, is worse. It is infidelity repeating creeds, and saying prayers; it is depravity in the robes of virtue; it is Judas in the character of an apostle; it is the devil in an archangel's garb. It is the greatest living lie in the world. It is an Achan in the camp; not in one camp, but in every camp in Christendom. The favour of God does not rest upon our path. We achieve no moral victories now. The enemy will continue to gain upon us until this "accursed thing"—this technical sainthood—is banished from our churches. "There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies until ye take away the accursed thing from among you."

Analysis of Homily the Sixty-eighth.

"But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul."—PROV. viii. 36.

SUBJECT:—*Sin a Self-injury.*

There are three facts implied in these words:—First. *That man is capable of sinning.* This, though a *truism*, is worthy of a statement on account of what it involves. Before, for

example, a being can be capable of sinning, he must possess three things :—*a knowledge of moral law—a capacity to obey that law—perfect freedom of choice.* This capability of sinning distinguishes man from the brute, and belongs to all moral beings. The highest angel in heaven has it, or there would be no virtue in his obedience. It is our glory that we *can* sin; it is our disgrace and ruin that we *do*. These words imply, secondly, *that sin is something directed against God.* “He that sinneth against me.” All the laws of man’s being—physical, organic, intellectual, and moral—are God’s laws, and violation of them is rebellion against Heaven. These words state, thirdly, *that sin against God is a wrong done to our nature.* This is true of all sin, physical as well as spiritual. So closely associated is the soul with the body, that what injures the one injures the other. We cannot violate the laws of physical health without losing at the same time something of the life, elasticity, and vigour of the mind. It is a sad fact that man has not as yet got a *conscience* concerning the violation of physical laws, as if sins against the *body* were not as truly sins against God as those more decidedly against the soul. *That sin injures the soul* admits of no debate: it is a patent fact written on every page of history, and proclaimed by the deep *consciousness* of humanity. Worldliness, falsehood, dishonesty, profanity, and every other sin that can be specified, could be soon proved wrongs against the soul. They deaden the moral sensibility, disturb the peace, warp the judgment, enfeeble the powers, and cloud the hopes of souls. From this unquestionable fact we may fairly deduce three general truths :—

1. THAT GOD’S LAWS ARE ESSENTIALLY CONNECTED WITH THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN. It is the characteristic of all God’s laws that they are written on the *constitution* of the subject. The atom—the flower—the beast—the man—the angel, all have their laws deep in their own nature. From this *fact* two things follow :—1. *That all sin is unnatural.* A state of sin is not the normal state of any being. 2. *That*

an evasion of the penalties of sin is beyond the power of the creature. A man may break the laws of his country, and may avoid the penalty. He may not be detected, or he may flee to foreign lands. The law that is violated may be arbitrary—not written in his nature. This cannot be with God's laws; they carry with them their own penalties right home into the constitution of the transgressor. He must flee from *himself* before he can flee from them. His deliverance can come only from the *Maker* of his nature. Hence, whilst the sinner's damnation requires no Divine interposition, his salvation cannot be effected without it.

We infer, from this fact—

II. THAT GOD'S LAWS ARE THE EXPRESSIONS OF BENEVOLENCE. We wrong our souls not by keeping, but by breaking God's laws. Obedience to them is happiness. *Analogy—experience—the Bible*, show this. The voice of all Divine prohibitions is, *Do thyself no harm*; the voice of all Divine injunctions is, *Rejoice evermore*. God's law is but God's *love* speaking in the imperative mood.

We infer, from this fact—

III. THAT GOD'S LAWS SHOULD BE STUDIOUSLY OBEYED.

1. Right requires this. All God's laws are righteously binding upon the subject, and disobedience is crime. 2. Expediency requires this. *A life of sin is a life of folly, for it must ever be a life of misery.* Sin is folly, and the greatest sinner, whatever his talents and attainments may be, is the greatest fool. In every sin he quaffs the cup of poison, which shall produce anguish, but never kill. In sinning,

“ We rave, we wrestle with great Nature's plan;
We thwart the Deity; and 'tis decreed,
Who thwart his will shall contradict their own.”

The Genius of the Gospel.

(Continued from page 285.)

[Able expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are happily not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remark, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.]

EIGHTH SECTION.—Matt. v. 1—12.

The Beatitudes; or, the Elements of Well-being.

WE have said that, in examining the elements of well-being here recorded, we discover two things worthy of attention—a *general correspondence between the whole, and a circumstantial difference between some*. Having discussed the former, we proceed now to an investigation of the latter.

II A CIRCUMSTANTIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOME. The elements of happiness here propounded by Christ divide themselves into two grand classes—the NECESSARY and the CONTINGENT—those which are indispensable to the happiness of a moral being in all worlds, and for ever, and those which depend upon the circumstances in which moral mind is found existing in this world of sin and suffering. Let us thoughtfully attend to each of these classes:—

First. *The necessary, or those which are indispensable to the well-being of moral souls in all worlds, for ever.* There are four of these in this passage—*humility, meekness, holy aspirations, and purity of heart.* Jesus refers to the first in the expression “poor in spirit.” The word “poor” implies *destitution*. What, then, is the destitution here meant? It is not the destitution of *temporal good*? for although physical poverty

may be over-ruled for spiritual good, it is nevertheless an evil in itself. It is not the destitution of *intellectual knowledge*. This is a greater evil still. "For the soul to be without knowledge is not good." Better be without food for the body than without ideas for the mind. Great ideas are the pinions of the soul: by them we soar, with eagle swiftness, from the earth, cleave the clouds, and bask high up in the bright day-beams of truth. Nor is it the destitution of *mental independency* that is here meant. That fawning spirit—the brand-mark of little souls, which sacrifices the rights of manhood for the smiles of power—has ever been, and still is, one of the greatest obstructions in the path of human progress. It is the broad base in society on which all despotisms, political and religious, rear their crushing iron thrones. But the destitution Jesus means is that of SELF-IMPORTANCE—the entire absence of all pride and egoistic thought and feeling. Where this humility is not, where there is pride in any mind, there can be no blessedness. By pride the pure spirits of heaven sank to hell; by humility the imperfect spirits of earth ascend to heaven. He that humbleth himself is exalted. Of these humble souls Jesus says, "theirs is the kingdom." All the privileges and immunities of the good are *theirs* in experience now. How happy is a truly humble soul!—how free from all those painful emotions which ever start from restless ambitions, empty vanity, and foolish pride!—how acquiescent in Heaven's arrangements, and how sensible of every heavenly gift! The smallest mercy touches the heart-strings into music, and, along the darkest path, the spirit sings, "I am not worthy of the least of all thy favours." Verily, "theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Another of these elements of well-being, which are indispensable to the happiness of moral souls in all worlds, and for ever, is *meekness*. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." What is meekness? It is not *stoical insensibility*. Jesus was meek, and yet no nature was more sensitive than his: the softest zephyr rippled the deep crystal current of his heart. Nor is it *cowardice*—the opposite of the

intrepid and the brave in feeling—but it is calm energy of soul. It is power blended with gentleness—boldness with humility—the harmlessness of the dove with the prowess of the lion. It is the soul in the majesty of self-possession, elevated above the precipitant, the irascible, the boisterous, and the revengeful. It is the soul throwing its benignant smiles on the furious face of the foe, and penetrating his heart, and paralyzing his arm, with the look of love. This is, indeed, an element of blessedness : they who have it, says Christ, “shall inherit the earth.” The allusion here may be to Canaan ; and as the Jews in the wilderness looked forward to the inheriting of Palestine as the highest good, probably Jesus uses the expression to convey to their minds the idea, that the meek in spirit shall receive the best of blessings. Still the language need not be regarded as thus figurative. It is *literally* true that the men of holy meekness “inherit the earth.” Who is the man that most truly inherits the earth? Not the man of an ambitious and restless spirit, though he may call a million acres his own. Such a man has no spirit-home : his soul roams through his estates, like the unclean spirit in the desert, seeking rest, but finding none. It is the man of holy meekness that inherits the earth. Though, on law-grounds, he has no claim to a foot of soil, he feels a vital interest and a spiritual property in all. He is the master of himself : he can sit upon the throne of his being, bid his intellect turn the phenomena of the universe into joyous realms of thought ; his heart, the wide earth into a temple of devotion ; and his faith, the fiercest roar of the elements into music. He inherits the earth—feels at home in all—appropriates all—makes all serve the high ends of his being.

Another of these elements of well-being, which are indispensable to the happiness of moral souls in all worlds, and for ever, is *holy aspiration*. “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” There are centreing in our complicated nature a variety of appetites. These appetites are ever the springs of action. There are the animal for food, the intellectual for truth, the

moral for rectitude. The power of the first is seen in all : it keeps the world in action. The power of the second is seen mainly in the thinker : it is the impulse of the philosopher. The power of the last is seen in the Church : it is the spring of religion. The second is not so generally felt as the first, nor is the third so generally felt as the second, and yet the third far transcends the other two in importance. Man's deepest want is *righteousness*, and to hunger and thirst for it is therefore natural and right. Appetite implies two things :— (1) *Health*. The body without appetite for food is diseased, the intellect without an appetite for truth is diseased, and the soul without an appetite for righteousness is diseased ; and the reason therefore why men do not hunger and thirst more after righteousness is, because the soul *is* diseased. Appetite implies (2) *provision*. The existence of any native desire—physical, intellectual, or moral—implies a corresponding object. They that hunger and thirst after “righteousness”—moral excellence—“*shall* be fed.” There is no obstacle to prevent the poorest man from becoming good. Goodness, like the air we breathe, is ever at hand ; it encompasses our path. If we really *desire* it, we shall have it. This holy aspiration is indispensable to the happiness of all finite intelligences ; without it, even angelic natures would have no stimulus, and would make no progress. Their energies would wane into weakness for the want of exercise. Under its craving force the world of happy spirits ever press “towards the mark” for a still higher “prize ;” and, as they press, they rise to brighter scenes, and feel the ecstasies of sublimer joys. Truly blessed, then, are they that “hunger and thirst after righteousness.”

Another of these elements of well-being, which are indispensable to the happiness of moral souls in all worlds, and for ever, is *purity of heart*. Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God.” The Jews attended well to ceremonial cleanness, but sadly neglected cleanness of heart. A pure heart is a heart where divine love, like a celestial fire, flames on, burning up all that is sensual and false, illuminating

every chamber of the soul, and making God visible in its beams. Under the law, none but those who were ceremonially pure were admitted to the presence of God in his temple. This was an arrangement only to symbolize the truth before us, that without purity of heart—moral holiness—no man can see the Lord. God cannot be seen by the bodily eye, for he has no form; nor by the intellectual eye, for, beyond the utmost limits of all ratiocination, he “dwells in light which no man can approach” intellectually. He can only be seen with the eye of the *heart*, and only with that eye when the heart is pure. The atmosphere around these hearts must be cleared of all the mists and fogs of evil, if we would see the eternal sun in his glory. The moral mirror of the soul must be burnished well before it can reflect the glorious image of its God. “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.”

Secondly. *The other class of the elements of well-being here mentioned are the contingent, or those which are indispensable to the happiness of a moral being in this world of sin and suffering.* These are *penitential sorrow, mercy, pacificness, and righteous endurance.* The first is referred to in the fourth verse:—“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.” Mourning arises from various causes. Disappointments—bereavements—diseases—poverty—social slander—oppression—moral contrition, are some of the sources from which proceed those manifold streams of sorrow which roll their turbulent billows over human souls. But it is, we think, to moral mourning—mourning on account of sin—that Jesus here refers. This penitential sorrow does not arise merely from the fear of the *consequences* of sin, either temporal or eternal, but from a deep sense of its enormity as rebellion against the God of infinite holiness and love. This “godly sorrow, which worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of,” is truly a “blessed” sorrow. Though painful, it is only the great physician probing the moral wound before he applies the “sovereign balm;” it is but the passing tempest, whose frowning fury is clearing the air, watering the earth, making bright the sky, and unveiling in fairer beauties the face of the

world. This element of well-being is not necessary in heaven, because there is no sin there; but it is indispensable to the happiness of every depraved soul on earth. Christ announces an irrevocable law in this beauty, and that is, that *penitential sorrow must precede human happiness*. "Except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish."

"E'er since the fall man's penitence his blessedness precedes;
'Tis grief that tunes his heart to music,
'Tis tribulation fits him for the skies."

Mercy is another element indispensable to the happiness of a moral being in this world of sin and suffering. Mercy is a modification of benevolence: it is benevolence called out in a certain direction, and feeling for a certain class, and that class the suffering. Mercy is benevolence commiserating the sufferer. Nature, in her ten thousand modes, expresses God's benevolence. Christ, in his sympathies and prayers, his doctrines and doings, his sufferings and death, expresses God's mercy: He is benevolence in contact with suffering. So long as we are in a world of suffering, it is required of us that our benevolence should go out in the form of mercy. Mercifulness befits our situation, and is essential to our spiritual culture. This form of love is not required in heaven, because of the absence of suffering from that happy scene. "The merciful," says Christ, "shall obtain mercy." We all here, as children of woe, *need* mercy. If we are "merciful," says Christ, we shall obtain mercy. No law is more certain than this, both in relation to society and God. With what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again. "Inasmuch as ye did unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." Mercy is its own reward;—

"It is twice blessed:
It blesses him that gives, and him that takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown."

Another element here mentioned as belonging to the happiness of a moral being in this world of sin and suffering, is

pacifiveness. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." The disposition of a peacemaker is a blessed one: it implies *self-control—a generous sympathy with the conflicting parties—a calm, moral, meditating power, equal to the subjugation of antagonistic souls*. The peacemaker has far higher attributes than the warrior. A man has only to have the low cunning of the fox and the savage daring of the lion to become famous on the battle-field; but he must have the philosophy of a sage and the love of a saint to act effectively the "day's-man"—put his hand upon contending parties, and of "twain make one." Such "shall be called"—*will be*—"the children of God." The peacemaker is like the "God of peace;" and filiation to that God consists in *moral assimilation* to his character.

There is yet another element mentioned as belonging to the blessedness of moral being in this world of sin and suffering, and that is *righteous endurance*. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Jesus does not say that all who suffer and are persecuted are blessed. This would not be true. He therefore states two attributes of the persecution to which he attaches these blessings:—First: *It must be undeserved*. It must be evil said or done against you FALSELY. There could be no blessing in merited suffering. Secondly. *This undeserved persecution must be for "righteousness' sake."* It must be inflicted on account of your faithful attachment to right and Christ. "For my sake." When persecution comes thus—when it is undeserved, and for Christ's sake—its endurance is, indeed, a great blessing. 1. It connects us with the highest system. "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven." 2. It ensures for us the highest reward. "Great is your reward in heaven." 3. It identifies us with the greatest men of all ages. "For so persecuted they the

prophets which were before you." Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, and Daniel are a few of the great examples. Their sufferings lifted them to a world-wide and lasting renown.

Such are the elements of well-being here propounded by Christ. One class is indispensable to the happiness of moral mind everywhere, and for ever; and the other class is indispensable to the happiness of moral mind in this world, where there is sin, and suffering, and war, and persecution. Let us learn to seek our happiness not in outward wealth and power, but in the cultivation of these moral elements. Philosophy and experience unite with Christ in declaring that such heart-states are the only sources of true joy. The well-cultivated soul is man's only paradise. There are the "living fountains of waters;" there grows every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The "tree of life" springs from its own soil: the soul is its own heaven.

Glances at some of the Great Preachers of England.

No. III.—RICHARD BAXTER.

POETS tell us that the clouds of heaven, as they rise from, and hover over, the earth, receive an impress from its mountains and valleys, its rivers and seas, its cities and fields; and, however high the clouds afterwards ascend, that they still retain some likeness to their terrestrial prototypes. We cannot undertake to answer for the scientific truthfulness of the poets' theory, though he must be a very careless explorer of "cloud-land" who has not observed and admired its noble mountain ranges, among which "Alps on Alps arise," and been ready to conclude that the inhabitant of "field and

flood" were dwelling for a time *in nubibus*; or, at least, ready to say, with the Danish major-domo, concerning some of these ærial fantastic shapes, "Very like a weasel; very like a whale!" Might we not, without challenge, adopt a similar theory to the foregoing concerning the great epochs which history presents, and say that they bear a similitude to those marvellous convulsions of Nature, when the waters of ocean spring from their lowest depths; when "valleys rise, and mountains sink;" when torrents of liquid fire burst forth from the bowels of the earth; or when, opening "wide her marble jaws," she swallows up the mansions, temples, and cities of mankind? Yes; the pages of history and the phenomena of Nature present us with strange events, with marvellous and mighty results; and in these may be seen, by the thoughtful student, much of the power of the created, and still more of the over-ruling and supreme power of the infinite Creator of matter and of mind.

Among the great "epochs" of history, the English Revolution of the seventeenth century must occupy a foremost place. Like the great convulsions of Nature, it has its bright as well as its gloomy side—its elements of life, and its elements of death. Hence, to this hour, many of the least prejudiced and most penetrating students of history, feel towards it much as Hamlet felt toward the armed spectre which crossed his path:—

"Angels and ministers of grace, defend us!—

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damned,

Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,

Be thy intents wicked or charitable,

Thou comest in such a questionable shape,

That I will speak to thee."

If we gaze upon its dark side, with what gloom does the contemplation fill the mind! It destroyed the House of Peers, the noblest patrician parliament which Europe had ever seen; it struck down the established Episcopal Church, which had survived the storms of a thousand years; it brought to the

block a powerful, refined, talented, and, compared with many others of his regal race, a virtuous prince ; it placed, in fierce battle array, province against province, city against city, family against family, man against man. Its powerful influence was not bounded by the shores of our native island, nor did the lapse of many years exhaust its gigantic strength. It produced, or at least prepared the way for, many of the portentous proceedings of the first French Revolution, and the upheavings of its still mighty waves are felt to this hour beneath every European state.

Looking, therefore, merely at the evils which it has produced, its aspect is, indeed, malign : “black it stands as night” —a calamity and a curse—a very “scourge of God.” But it has its bright and cheering side. Just as some diseases are only health in the forming ; as the dark clouds are filled with fertilizing showers ; as the tempests of the ocean prevent it from becoming a great pestiferous pool—a vast black sea of death ; or as the lightnings flash, and the thunders roll, through the sky, to cleanse the air from noxious elements, and preserve to us the breath of life ; so the most portentous “epochs” of history have been over-ruled by a beneficent Providence, to the production of abiding good for man, and the manifestation of the Divine power, wisdom, and love. The great Revolution of the seventeenth century was not all darkness and distress. If the limited monarchy of England is to be preferred to the despotism of Russia or France ; if we possess a parliament admired and imitated in every land which possesses liberty worthy of the name ; if an unshackled press, personal freedom, and religious liberty are of more worth than the treasures of the East, the artistic fame of Greece, and the martial glories of imperial Rome ; let us never forget that, under God, we owe these noble possessions to the great struggle of the seventeenth century ;—a struggle, we admit, which involved much suffering, and which upon some of the combatants has entailed much shame, but in which the dire and destructive beast of despotism was laid

low, from whose prostrate carcase all coming generations, like Sampson after the conquest of the lion, will gather sweet and strengthening food.

If it be granted that the middle years of the seventeenth century constitute a memorable epoch in the annals of the nation, it follows that the leading men of that epoch deserve the appellation of "great." Little men may make themselves prominent in little times, but those men must be giants in wisdom, power, and courage, who can take the helm, and guide the vessel to the port, when the waves rise mountains-high, and all others of the crew "stagger to and fro, and are at their wits' end."

"The sea being smooth,
How many shallow, bauble boats dare sail
Upon her patient breast, making their way
With those of nobler bulk?
But let the ruffian Boreas once enrage
The gentle Thetis, and anon, behold
The strong-ribbed bark through liquid mountains cut,
Bounding between the two moist elements
Like Perseus' horse: where's then the saucy boat,
Whose weak untimber'd sides but even now
Co-rivalled greatness? Either to harbour fled,
Or made a toast for Neptune. Even so
Doth Valour's show, and Valour's worth, divide
In storms of fortune."

The seventeenth century was, indeed, prolific of great men. What "men of war" were Blake and Cromwell! What patriots were Falkland and Hampden! How unsullied was the ermine of Sir Matthew Hale! The fame of Milton fills the world. The names of Jeremy Taylor and John Howe, of Owen and Baxter, are worthy to be classed with those of Athanasius and Jerome, Chrysostom and Augustine. We think we shall do well, therefore, to devote a few pages of our periodical to a consideration of the character and conduct of that great man and renowned servant of God, Richard Baxter. We love and honour the truly great and good of every section of the Church of Christ; and that we do not

exaggerate the excellence of Baxter when we assert him to be one of the foremost men of the seventeenth century, let the following quotations prove.

Our first quotation is from Orme's "Life of Baxter," a work of which no minister of the gospel, no student of history, and no lover of literature can be ignorant, without causing a great loss to his intellect, his knowledge, and his heart.

"In describing him, I have no better or more appropriate term which I can employ than the word *unearthly*. . . . The strength of this principle appeared in all the workings of his mind, and in every part of his personal conduct as a Christian. It was manifested in the intense ardour of his zeal, and the burning fervour of his preaching. . . . Influenced by this principle, he threw himself into the army, to check what he considered its wild career. He reprov'd Cromwell, he expostulated with Charles, and dared the frowns of both. The same motive induced him to abstain from marriage, while his work required all his attention. To him a bishopric had no charms, and a prison no terrors, when he could not enjoy the one with a good conscience, and was doomed to the other for conscience' sake. He stood unappalled before the bar of Jefferies, listening with composure to his ribaldry, and would have gone to the gibbet or the stake without a murmur or complaint."—Vol. I., p. 509.

The other quotation is from that most graphic of historians, the Right Honourable T. B. Macaulay :—

"No eminent chief of a party has ever passed through many years of civil and religious dissension with more innocence than Richard Baxter. He belonged to the mildest and most temperate section of the Puritan body. He was a young man when the Civil War broke out. He thought that the right was on the side of the houses, and he had no scruple about acting as chaplain to a regiment in the parliamentary army ; but his clear and somewhat sceptical understanding

and his strong sense of justice, preserved him from all excesses. He exerted himself to check the fanatical violence of the soldiery. He condemned the proceedings in the High Court of Justice. In the days of the commonwealth, he had the boldness to express, on many occasions, and once even in Cromwell's presence, love and reverence for the ancient institutions of the country. While the royal family was in exile, Baxter's life was chiefly passed at Kidderminster, in the assiduous discharge of parochial duties. He heartily concurred in the Restoration, and was sincerely desirous to bring about an union between Episcopalians and Presbyterians; for, with a liberality rare in his time, he considered questions of polity as of small amount when compared with the great principles of Christianity, and had never, even when prelacy was most odious to the ruling powers, joined in the outcry against the bishops. The attempt to reconcile the contending factions failed. Baxter cast in his lot with his proscribed friends, refused the mitre of Hereford, quitted the parsonage of Kidderminster, and gave himself up almost wholly to study. His theological writings, though too moderate to be pleasing to the bigots of any party, had an immense reputation. Zealous Churchmen called him a Roundhead, and many Non-conformists accused him of Erastianism and Arminianism; but the integrity of his heart, the purity of his life, the vigour of his faculties, and the extent of his attainments, were acknowledged by the best and wisest of men of every persuasion."—*History of England*, vol. I., pp. 490-91.

(To be continued.)

Theological and Pulpit Literature.

“THE SIMPLE GOSPEL.”

TO THE EDITOR OF “THE HOMILIST.”

As you consented to admit my former brief letter, I venture to send you a second, equally, I think, within the scope of your periodical.

“Sir, what we want is the simple gospel,” was a remark I heard the other day at a public meeting, and one which may be heard, both in public and private, any day and every day. “The simple gospel!” What is it? How do they explain it? Calvinius says it is the annunciation of eternal election to the elect; Methodius, that it is the declaration of a mercy prepared for, and offered to, every body and any body; and Modernus affirms it to be a *via media* between these two; whilst there are parties who declare none of these to be correct, or only in part correct, each leaving out or putting in what vitiates their creed entirely on the point. But what those others say I inquire not now. These three parties are the chief speakers in *our* religious world, well termed the evangelical, and on these would I call to expound their oft-used language. What mean you, oh, friends, by “the simple gospel?” Is your view of it Calvinius’? or yours Methodius’? or yours Modernus’? or is it something common to, or different from, all? or may any conscientious man venture on his own view of the gospel, dear friends? and will *that* satisfy your expressed need? or when you, my three friends, with one voice, bid me preach twice or thrice, Lord’s-day by Lord’s-day, to the same congregation, the simple gospel, do you mean I am to dwell on the one theme, mercy, simply in its naked form of mercy—a salvation as it exists without a man—confining my statements chiefly to the Father’s love and the Son’s work? Even thus, you say. What!—no mention, brethren, of high doctrine or low, election or non-election, human depravity or purity, justice or grace, hell or heaven? No, no, you cry, all this must be included in preaching the simple gospel. Simple! Truly, it begins to be complicated, I fear. But if I do this, is it all? Yes; this is what we want—“the simple gospel.” But am I to ignore everything else in my preaching?—the religious aspect of

nature—the religious character of man—the peculiar forms of human selfishness—the great dependent truths of Christianity? Am I to educate my people on religious principles, or amuse and flatter them with religious words? Am I to play on one string, or all of the great instrument put into my hands? Principally on one is, I think, your reply.

When my rich friend, speaking from his “pride of place,” demanded from all preachers the simple gospel, curious thoughts as to the reason for this arose. Why preach the simple gospel to him? Was he ignorant, and needed to be taught it? Was he forgetful, and needed to be reminded? Not so: no minister knows the theory better than he, some *he* half-suspects know it not so well. *Can it be, then, that this kind of preaching—ever exhibiting salvation as it is without a man; proving, enforcing, enlarging on, in picturing and weeping over what took place in a past eternity, or what was suffered by Christ on Calvary—is an easier, pleasanter thing to listen to than this salvation, preached as within the man—made to bear upon the daily workings of his soul—the daily living of his life; more agreeable with the six days’ routine; more encouraging and comforting to him as he is, and as he acts, in that station of life to which it has pleased God to call him. One would hope not, and yet a glance into the Church seems to justify the thought.*

The simple gospel! *Meliora* believes in it, and has been converted, and joined the Church as a believer in it, yet has she a temper like a devil—a tongue that talks the gospel and scandal in the same hour—a disposition so unforgiving that she will not speak to the offender for months or years. The simple gospel! *Mercator*, our deacon, believes it, and is very critical as to his minister and his preaching, yet his six days’ work in the great city leads him unblushingly into sharp practices. Some of his bill transactions sound very curious to simple men, and his servants there say he has a hard eye, a hard hand, and a hard heart. His neighbour, too, in the next pew, *Sealeanus*, is more than suspected of light weights and spurious articles, though he be the oldest member of the Church. Good Mrs. *Hard*, our rich member, loves the simple gospel; yet cannot one gain an extra shilling for the gospel, by its power, though fashion and the world can gain many for themselves? But what has all this to do with the “preaching of the simple gospel?” Just this: that the selfishness of the heart is pleased whilst I so set forth, again and again, terms of *grace*, as though I was ever preaching to the ignorant and unconverted. A kind of Christianized selfishness grows up in the Church itself, which, utterly un-Christ-like, is still looking simply to Christ; and, though it forget him, dishonour him, deny him in practice, is yet talking of him, loving him, and looking to him, in theory; and I believe something more than in theory, for faith in his

sufficiency, and an emotion of love for his goodness, may be felt by very unworthy Christians. Hence, I think, the simple gospel, or *good news*, is not all we want in preaching to a regular congregation, but the education of Christian life by *its means*, through the wide announcement of Christian responsibility—the bold correction of Christian vices—the laying down of all Christian principles; and this, though it be entirely in accordance with the New Testament, is something more than the “simple gospel.” The settled minister is something more than the mere evangelist: he has to edify the Church—to *build them up*, in the best sense, on that foundation which is laid by the simple gospel. It is but part of his duty to preach to sinners: he ought to be the means of rousing up others to preach to, and teach, the unconverted. He has to break down the selfishness of the Church, as the evangelist has to break down that of the world. There is, at this time, intense worldliness in the Church, and it seems to be compatible with the preaching of the simple gospel.

Do I, then, wish to put away the preaching of the simple gospel? Far from it. God forbid! But I object to the *selfish* demand for it, and *it only*, on the part of those who, in one sense, ought to be beyond it; who should not need that we be ever going back to first principles; who should not ask to be treated as “babes” always. The simple gospel received ought to be only the entrance on Christian privilege—the starting-point in Christian education—the germ-quickening of Christian life; and perhaps even men of the world may, by education and circumstances, be in such a position as to be wrought on by, and preached to on, those high principles which religion rests upon and teaches, and which include the simple gospel, but do not stay there. May we not err by supposing every congregation in the exact state of enlightenment in which the various congregations written to by the apostles were, and, by so doing, omit or deny things which are now true?

But whatever these suggestions may be worth, I, for one, should like to read a definition and defence of what we hear so much about as “preaching the simple gospel.”

Yours, &c.,

SCRUTATOR.

LITERARY NOTICES.

NOTES ON GENESIS: Designed principally for the Use of Students in Divinity. By the Rev. Sir C. MACGREGOR, Bart., M.A., Vicar of Cabourn, and Rural Dean. The First Part. London: Parker and Son, West Strand.

“BEWARE of the Hebrew tongue,” said a worthy monk in the days of Martin Luther. “Beware of the Hebrew tongue, or thou wilt become an accursed Jew; and beware of the Greek tongue, or thou wilt become a foul Pagan.” Peace be with thee, brother, and praise to God, that thou hast proved a false prophet. It is not wise, with such an example before us, to venture into the province of prediction, but we at least venture to *hope* that not many years will roll on ere every Christian minister will be able to read, and with ease, the holy scriptures in the language in which the Divine Spirit caused them to be composed. The above work is the result of a praiseworthy effort, so far as the Hebrew scriptures are concerned, to bring about this “consummation so devoutly to be wished.” We have found nothing exceptionable in the volume, and very much that is instructive and suggestive of thought. The writer is evidently learned without pedantry, and knows how to be critical without being dry. His reading has taken a wide range, and has not returned from the journey empty-handed, or without rich results. A mass of philological, exegetical, historical, and metaphysical matter is brought to bear upon the explanation and illustration of the inspired text. If the subsequent parts of the work prove to be as valuable as the first number, the editor will deserve much praise, the enterprising publishers will have their reward, and the possessors of the work will see reason to rejoice.

We can cordially commend the volume to all lovers of sacred lore, and heartily pray that God’s blessing may rest upon it.

DISCOURSES ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS. By the Rev. R. FERGUSON, LL.D. Ward and Co.

It is strange that a book containing so much valuable thought should bear a title so vague and vapid. We fear that it will act as a repellent. If it was suggested by modesty, we trust that justice to the work will baptize it with a better name on a future occasion.

The classification of ideas is not always what we deem logical, and some of the discourses, instead of being *educed* from the text, are super-induced. If a discourse be not the legitimate expansion of a truth in a given verse, or number of verses, why not write or speak without the hacknied formality of a text, making the book generally the standard of appeal?

The subjects on which Dr. F. treats are the most momentous, and some of them the most mysterious, within the range of thought. Though we cannot say that the *loco veratissimi* of theology are finally settled, still the author has done good service. He enters well-known labyrinthian passes, and sheds refreshing light as he advances. He appears on the battle-field where our metaphysical and theological gladiators have done battle—wears the crown, as if none were to question or dispute his right. He sails into the trackless ocean, but his eye is fixed on the polar-star; he enters the awful enclosure of the Eternal, but his face is veiled. He is conscientious enough to be cautious; he is courageous enough to be progressive. He is no reckless destroyer, no rash adventurer: he knows that a fool may pull down, but the wise alone can construct.

Dr. F. possesses the happy art of extracting good from all things. Truths the most abstract and scientific, as viewed by him, become religious and practical. Under his magic wand the minute and the vast, the proximate and the remote, are ever ready to convey, simplify, or beautify his thoughts. He has dropped some of the juridical animus of his brethren in the North to inhale and exhale one that is freer and diviner. He has made some innovations upon hoary creeds, knowing that the “dead orthodoxy” must be vitalised to save the world from its materialism, and the Church from its formality.

We heartily wish this work the wide circulation which it deserves; and we shall be glad to meet its esteemed author again, either in the republic of letters, or in the temple of religion.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ATHEISM EXAMINED AND COMPARED WITH
CHRISTIANITY. By Rev. B. GODWIN, D.D. Hall, Virtue, and Co.

CONTROVERSY on the being of a God, whatever may be its merits or issues—whether ably conducted or not; whether it advances or retards the spiritual progress of man—is, notwithstanding, a PHENOMENON in human history second to none in its claims to the most philosophic investigation. It stands before us as the most prodigious effect and

striking symbol of two potent and ever-active forces in human nature—the *speculative* and the *perverse*; the one of a purely psychological, and the other of a moral character. We see the speculative force in man marvellously developed in the Berkleyan philosophy, in not only throwing a doubt upon one of the primitive beliefs of humanity, but in the construction of plausible antagonistic arguments. In the atheistic controversy, however, that force assumes a more daring attitude still, and seeks the accomplishment of a far greater feat. There are but few truths over which this faculty cannot spread the dark mist of doubt, and but few errors that it cannot robe in the garb of logical propriety. The fact that we have a power to make logically clear what the heart of humanity disbelieves, indicates the vast liberty of thought which our Maker permits us, and also the caution with which we should examine all arguments running counter to the general beliefs of the soul. The *perverse* force of the soul, moreover, appears in a form the most appalling in this controversy. The very mooted of the question implies doubt upon a fact the greatest in itself, and the most momentous in its relation to our being and interest; and whichever side is taken perverseness is implied. Assume the affirmative, and then how lamentably wrong are those who deny such a stupendous fact, or assume the negative, and the case is little better. If there be no God, then, how perverse the millions of every age have been who have held the belief. If there be a God, humanity is proved morally perverse in denying it, and if there be not a God, humanity is proved morally perverse in holding and perpetuating the notion. The controversy, then, whichever side be true, indicates a mighty moral defection.

We regard Dr. Godwin's book as one of the best on the subject. It is intelligent, comprehensive, and popular. It indicates an extensive acquaintance with scientific truth, and with the history of the controversy. The arguments are telling, and its spirit is that of genuine honesty and kind-heartedness. The author does not lose sight of the *man* in the atheist.

THOUGHTS ON DIVINE PERFECTIONS. Birmingham: R. Matthison, 71, Edgbaston Street.

THIS is a *popular* discourse, and is one of the best of its kind. Whilst it lacks many of the attributes which would render it valuable to those who look for the deep, broad, analytic, and suggestive, it has the qualities which the great majority of sermon readers will highly prize, and to those we heartily commend it.

THE VOICE OF THE BIBLE TO THE AGE. By the Rev. ALFRED HENRY NEW, Leamington. London: Partridge and Oakey, Paternoster Row.

PROTESTANTISM, in its dullest moods, panegyricizes the Bible. It feels this to be its peculiar mission; and this it will do in the absence of all heart-homage. The book before us is, for many reasons, better than many of its class, which deal in high-sounding, extravagant, indiscriminate compliments to the Bible—sheer bombast. Mr. New writes as one penetrated with the spirit of the Divine Book, and expresses many good thoughts with a manifestly good intent.



A HOMILY

ON

The Pulpit and the Press; or, the Influence of the Ministry on Literature.

“And many that believed, came, and confessed, and showed their deeds. Many of them, also, which used curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed!”—Acts xix. 18—20.

LITERATURE is man written; his thoughts, creations, discoveries, and the varied events of his outer and inner life, transcribed in legible and permanent forms for the study of others. A book is a second incarnation of man's mental self: in it he lives and works, centuries after his former body has crumbled into dust. It is no new thing in the world. Its history dates almost as far back as the birth of the first earnest soul. When we consider the susceptibilities of impression, the powers of reflection, the social and religious sympathies which belong to our common nature, in connexion with the circumstances which mark our terrestrial life—circumstances ever potently tending to startle the thoughts, heave the emotions, and rouse the imagination—we are disposed to give to literature a very early date, and to hold the belief that man, at the very outset of his conscious history, commenced a record of himself. “Oh that my words were written! oh that they were printed in a book, that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!” This impassioned utterance may be fairly regarded as the irrepressible desire of the human soul, under the exciting circumstances of its earthly life, to register its history, and as pointing us back to

the remotest antiquity for the origin of the art. Egypt, Persia, Greece, and Rome, all had their authors. The Alexandrian library, with its hundred thousand volumes, presents no feeble idea of the extent of its influence in the earliest periods of the world's history. The invention of printing, by Gutenberg, a humble mechanic of Strasburg, gave to letters at once a new impulse and a new epoch. It has widened and enriched literature a thousand-fold. As the first book that issued from the press was *THE BOOK*, Strasburg becomes to us a second Bethlehem—the birthplace of a divine messenger that is destined to speak the thoughts of God to the extremities of the globe and to the end of time.

But it comes not within our purpose now to trace the history of letters; our aim in this homily is exclusively practical. *What is the true relation of the pulpit to the press?* What should be the conduct of ministers in relation to this mighty and ever-increasing power? Are we to oppose literature—set our faces against it as against a social demon? Is it our duty to do as many intimate—as some argue—shiver the press because of its corrupt influence, and turn the libraries of the world into bonfires? This question is settled by determining another; namely, does Christianity sanction the *principle* of diffusing and perpetuating the thoughts and doings of men, or not? Does it allow men to scatter their sentiments abroad, and send themselves down to future generations in books, or not? We have no hesitation in asserting the affirmative. “*Give attendance to reading,*” is an inspired injunction, implying at once that the principle of literature is divinely authorized, and that attention to literature is divinely demanded. In addition to this, there are such confirmatory considerations as the following:—

Literature is a *natural* development. It starts from two of the primal principles in man—the *imperative* and the *receptive* tendency—a strong disposition at once to communicate thoughts and to receive them. Who is not conscious of the constant working of these correlative powers within him? They are the bonds of society: they unite men together by the ties of

mutual obligation ; they prompt and enable the noble and the pure to breathe their sentiments and spirit into the age in which they live, and thus lift it toward their own ideal. These mental proclivities, deep in the common heart of all, are the wellspring of literature ; they make the author and the reader too. The one furnishes the producer, and the other the consumer, in the great mart of letters.

Now, to us it is an axiom in thought that what is really natural is really right, and what is really right is really Christian. Again :—

Christianity is transmitted through literature. The communications of Heaven to the fathers and to the prophets ; the biography of Jesus and the thoughts of the apostles ; these world-renovating and saving forces would never have reached us but for the pen. Hence no command did the world's Saviour, in his final Apocalypse, repeat with more frequency or earnestness than—WRITE. Moreover :—

Christianity stimulates the literary propensities. It has historically proved itself *the* mental awakener—the archangel's trump to summon dead minds from their graves. Most of the great authors were trained under its influence. The choicest flowers that adorn, and the finest fruits that enrich, the fields of literature, have sprung, either directly or indirectly, from Christian minds. The truth is, Christianity gives a new eye to intellect, a new wing to fancy, a new pulse and stimulus to the thinking life.

These remarks are, we presume, sufficient to show that Christianity sanctions literature, and that therefore we dare not oppose it. No, my pious friend, my cynical brother ; bad as books are, corrupt as is the press, the principle of writing is divine ; and it must be left free as the winds. Yes ! whether it wafts the salubrities of truth or the pestilence of error, still free as the winds it must be.

What, then, is our duty as ministers in relation to literature ? We reply in one sentence—*To raise Christianity to a predominant influence.* This the apostle did at Ephesus. Such was the effect of his preaching, that his hearers, who had

in their possession costly books—scrolls containing the mystic symbols and incantations of sorcery and astrology, and by which they obtained their livelihood—“brought them together, and burned them before all men.” Here you have a specimen of what we *can* and *ought* to do in relation to literature. Our aim must be to make Christianity the presiding genius in all books. We do not say to get all books filled with its characteristic subjects—this is not required, nor would it be expedient—but to get all books filled and ruled by its spirit. To get its divine *animus* in all the products of the pen, as the sun is in every blade and flower and tree of the landscape, giving a tinge of loveliness and a glow of life to all. This is confessedly a great work, and may require ages for its accomplishment; but at nothing less than this dare we aim. Though we cannot reach the mark, we can step towards it, and this we are bound to do. *How* and *why* we are to aim at it, are questions naturally suggested, and which must occupy the remainder of our space.

I. HOW ARE WE TO AIM AT THE CHRISTIANIZATION OF LITERATURE? There are three things which can be done:—First. Patronize only the literature which Christianity sanctions. This implies, of course, that there is a possibility of ascertaining the literature that Christianity would sanction. How is this to be done? Is it by the *material* of books? We have volumes on all subjects—history, science, language, philosophy, and poetry; books to enlighten, to discipline, and to amuse. Is the congruity or non-congruity of a book with Christianity to be decided by the *subject* of which it treats? No; truth is one, whether it comes down from the starry dome, up from the stratified earth, back from the revolutions of the past, or out from the abysses of the soul. All truth speaks in one voice, and though in different tones, for one end; that voice is the voice of God—that end is the weal of man. It is the *mental characteristics* of their authors? We have books written by every variety of mind. There is the metaphysical, first in order, penetrating into unseen

regions, and heaving from depths into which no vulture's eye had pierced the golden elements of truth. There is, next, the logical, combining these elements according to their rational relations, and bearing them by argument to the judgments of men. There is, next, the poetic, moulding all into new forms, and breathing into all new life; dressing truth in Orient beauty—dipping it in the splendours of the rainbow, and making it speak in the language of flowers, and shine in the brightness of stars. All these characteristics of mind we find existing in authors—existing separately in every degree, and conjointly in every proportion. He who combines them all to the greatest extent is the true genius. Our Shakspeare and Milton have them all; hence they sit enthroned as the literary monarchs of the world. Now, are we required by Christianity to adopt books written by any particular talent to the exclusion of others? No; it requires every mind to stir up the gift that is in it, and to work in its own way. If you cannot do one thing in rearing the temple of truth, do another; if you cannot bring the parts into a symmetrical adjustment, provide the gold, polish the pillars, ornament the ceiling, fit up with divine furniture the holy of holies; do *something*, even if it be hewing of wood and drawing of water. Still more: is it to be ascertained by the form in which the book is written—prose or poetry, fact or fiction? No. Has not Christianity adopted all these? If, then, we cannot discover the point, either by its subjects, the mental characteristics of its authors, or its forms, how are we to find it out? We answer, emphatically, by its SPIRIT. There is a spirit in every book which even a child can easily detect. The face of man does not so clearly express the general disposition of the heart, as does the first page of a book develop the spirit of the writer. There is a moral odour emitted from every leaf, which the inner sense, unless sadly perverted, can soon discover. Here, then, is the Christian's test of good literature. The book that "hath not the spirit of Christ is none of his." What volumes are we called upon by this test to lay aside and reprobate! All the *trifling* books must go. Occasional

flashes of native wit and humour are admissible. They frequently light up the argument, and give a charm to the page and a zest to the reader. But works in which there is nothing but a studied attempt to excite the risible, and to promote laughter, must be repudiated as incompatible with the dignity of our nature and the solemnity of our relations. All the *prostrating* literature must go. The tendency of much of the popular writings of the day is to make the soul passive rather than active—act upon humanity rather than to rouse humanity to act upon it. One of the greatest objections to what is called fictitious literature is not its fictitious style, for much of the Bible comes to us in that garb, but its deteriorating influence upon the mind. It is mental alcohol. It sets the mind to act in dreamy elysiums; steals from it all the necessary energies for the duties of life; makes it intensely alive to ideal sorrow and heroism, but dead to the sorrows and heroism of the real world. It is reported of a popular novelist that, after he put forth a portion of his work, and was proceeding with the remainder of the tale, he received numerous letters entreating him to bring his heroine to a happy end, stating that the happiness of the writers depended upon the issue. Is it not an ineffable disgrace to allow our natures to be thus acted upon? We trust the day is dawning when both man and woman will feel themselves insulted by any writer or speaker attempting to act thus on their sensibilities, rather than to rouse their reason and en-throne their conscience. Such literature grows phantom-corn, not veritable fruit; food for sylphs, not for men. These emasculating, gasy books, must be renounced, for the *spirit* of Christianity is that of power and truth. Its aim is not to nourish sickly sentiment, but to awaken healthy thought; not to make men whine and laugh amidst flitting visions, but to worship and labour amidst immutable realities.—All *anti-religious* literature must go. All books which aim to crush the religious element in man, quench the sense of moral obligation, rupture the tie which attaches him to the Everlasting—whatever form they assume—whether they come in the

philosophy of Hume, the wit of Voltaire, the scurrility of Paine, or the eloquence of Gibbon—we must repudiate, for the spirit of Christianity is that of reverential loyalty to the Eternal.—All *sensual* literature must go. The writings which appeal more to the passions than to the reason, excite more animal feeling than spiritual thought, kindle in the inner temple more carnal fire than mental light, whatever garb they assume—narrative or novel, poetry or prose; penned by Fielding, Moore, Byron, or even geniuses superior to either—are condemned by the spirit of that system which demands the mortifying of the flesh.—All *temporizing* literature must go. Books that lower the standard of moral obligation—that advocate expediency rather than right as the rule of life—that enforce what is best now rather than what is right for ever—that view man rather as the citizen of time than the offspring of the Infinite and the heir of eternity—must be put away from us. They are hostile to the spirit of that religion which requires us to do all to the glory of God. Judging books, then, by the simple and practical test propounded, how much of the literature of the world is antagonistic to the spirit of Christianity!

Now, if we could elevate our religion—raise her to the throne in the kingdom of letters—give her the sceptre and the crown—her indisputable right, we must encourage by purchase, perusal, and pulpit influence, not the literature which its SPIRIT condemns, but the books that breathe her heavenly genius, though they enunciate not her dogmas. If it be the duty of Christ's disciples to separate themselves from the personal friendships of men of corrupt minds, can it be right for them to admit their pestiferous thoughts into their own bosoms by the perusal of their works, or to promote their circulation in the world by encouraging the sale of their productions? Separation from the literature of such authors happily involves no intellectual denial; for although books written in the true religious spirit are as nothing in *quantity* to the great bulk of the world's literature, they comprehend every branch of knowledge, and occupy every department of

letters; and will be found, moreover, in relation to loftiness of genius, breadth of philosophy, and profundity of erudition, equal to any of which the world can boast.

Secondly. Another thing which we must do, in order to make Christianity the presiding element in literature, is to promote its influence in the world—to imbue society with its regenerative principles. In this way Paul's ministry acted at Ephesus. "Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed!" Infuse Christianity into the public mind, and you will kindle a moral fire that shall burn up all corrupt literature. This is the book-burning we desiderate. This fire burns not the paper, but the spirit. The Catholics burned the paper of Luther's tracts; but, phoenix-like, the spirit rose from the flames to print the doctrines of Luther in volumes that shook Europe to its inner heart. Popular intelligence is every day outgrowing books that were the lights of other times. Thousands of volumes, on philosophy, science, history, and criticism, we have left behind to moulder in the past. Every day the modern world bids adieu to books that were the great oracles of generations that are gone.

Now, as *intellectually* we part company with books on the ground of their *contents* the moment we transcend their intelligence, so *morally* we should separate from books on the ground of their *spirit* the moment we feel ourselves the subjects of a superior disposition. Let the popular spirit, therefore, be improved by the influence of Christianity, and writings of a corrupt animus, however brilliant in genius, or profound in thought, will be forthwith abandoned. *No talent will keep a corrupt book alive in a pure age.* The Byrons will not be tolerated a day in the millennium of holiness.

Thirdly. We may yet mention another method of raising Christianity to supreme influence in literature—namely, by contributions of commanding interest and Christian feeling. We say commanding interest, for it is worse than worthless to

send books into the world which have no power for this. Thousands of such volumes fall from the press every year, either still-born, or with constitutions too feeble to live many days. They are the modified echoes of other books which the world has read out—old hoary thoughts passing through modern channels, and diluted into water. They are written by men who

“ Steal a thought,
And clip it round the edge, and challenge him
Whose ’twas, to swear to it.”

There is nothing in them to attract the attention of men : they start no thought, solve no problem, kindle no inspiration. Books to command an interest must be fresh, vigorous, and earnest ; they must be the native expression of the individual *thinker*—seeds falling from a plant full of life, passing on to another spring. They must be congruous with the reason and heart of the world—fitted for the mental habits and experiences of this the nineteenth century of our Lord. Why should not the pulpit produce authors that would speak to humanity, and become princes in the realms of literature? Will the Church never produce any more such men as Defoe, Bunyan, and Milton? Has it less native genius, or is it less in contact with the fountain of truth than the world? Why should this age be under the literary dominion of men whose aim seems to be nothing higher than to provoke the world to laughter or to drive it into scepticism? My brother, if thou hast great thoughts, WRITE them, and write them *naturally*. Fear not the wordy critics who are ever looking at the *garb* of ideas, pronouncing judgment about style, and would have all souls wear robes cut after the fashion of their own. Remember, “no style is good but Nature’s style.” Mould the imperishable elements of truth into thine own forms of beauty, paint them with the hues of thine own genius, construct them for the world, inspire them with the life of religion, commit them to the press, and a great work will be done. The triumph of the conqueror, the crown of the monarch, the

highest fame of the poet's dream, will not equal the honour that awaits thee. A good book is the greatest boon a man can bequeath to posterity. Estates and empires are nothing to it. "As good almost," says Milton, "kill a man as kill a good book. Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book kills reason itself—kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth, but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."

Fourthly. There is yet another method of raising Christianity to a supreme influence in literature, and that is, *making the ministry of the pulpit more attractive than the ministry of the press*. Twice, in the history of Christianity, has the pulpit risen to an ascendancy in the social state. In the few post-apostolic ages preceding the long night of mediæval ignorance and superstition, preachers were the mental sovereigns of the people: men everywhere looked to them for guidance, and bowed to their decision. Their words were mightier than the arguments of sages or the edicts of kings. And soon after the bright sun of the Reformation had broken in upon the Papal darkness of the middle ages, we find the pulpit risen again to a regal power. Mankind again listened to its voice with a reverent heart. It was the oracle of the age: from it princes learned their politics, and peoples their religion. A heathenly ritualized Christianity dethroned it in the first period of its sovereignty, and a secular press has done so in the second; for it is no longer an imperial power in the state. The priesthood of letters has long since wrested the sceptre from the ministers of religion. The world goes to libraries to learn, and not to temples now. Whilst the preacher speaks to units, the periodical speaks to hundreds. We grieve not that literature has become so powerful, but that the ministry, in comparison with it, has grown so weak. A modern writer on this subject has said, "that the ministers of religion will never again be the ruling *class*. They may again be powerful agents in public affairs, but they will never

more be the chief agents." This prediction of our modern seer may prove true, but we see no *necessary* reason why it should; nay, we see elements of power within the reach of the ministry which, if properly employed, would falsify the prophecy, and make the pulpit once more the moral master of the world. We hold that *the preacher has at his command all the elements of power that a writer has, with others peculiar to himself*. What real element of power can you find in the most powerful book that a minister is not *really* authorized to put into a sermon? If it be said that the popularity and power of a book depend upon its appeals to the lower passions of human nature, we reply that the most popular books of the world have not been distinguished by such appeals, and, in some cases, are entirely destitute of all such elements. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is a striking illustration of this. No uninspired book, perhaps, has obtained a greater mastery over souls, and no book is more free from sensualism than it. "Fleshly" as the world is, such a fact in literature shows that it is tender enough to feel the pure, and loyal enough to bow to the true. In what, then, does the power of a book consist? We say that a book is powerful in proportion to *the genius it develops, the number of the faculties it appeals to, the variety of soul-chords it touches into tune, the intimacy of its suggestions with felt interests, and the congruity of the whole with the inward sense of intellectual and moral propriety*. If these are the elements of power in a book, are they not within the reach of the pulpit? Does not the pulpit afford scope for genius? Have not the great painters and poets of the world gone to the preacher's book for materials out of which to work those magnificent productions that have filled successive ages with their fame? * Is there a power in the soul that the

* "The finest subjects for historic painting within the entire circle of the Fine Arts have been selected from the Scriptures. Such are Lot and his two daughters hastened by the angels out of Sodom, and the finding of Moses on the Nile, by Rembrandt; Moses striking the Rock, by Poussin; the Deluge, by Trumbull; Belshazzar's Feast, by Martin; the Transfiguration, and the Madonna, by Raphael; Moses

preacher is not authorized to touch? Are there any suggestions within the wide sweep of thought more closely identified with the felt interests of men than those that he has to propound? and can any truths appear to be made more congruous with the sense of the proper in man than those which he has to unfold?

In addition to these elements of power which the preacher has in common with the writer, he has the *voice*, *looks*, and *actions* which serve to give a charm and force to thoughts which no pen can impart; and then, too, men have a greater propensity to listen than to read. We say, then, that the ministry of the pulpit *may* be rendered, and *ought* to be rendered, more attractive than the ministry of the press; and when that is done, the pulpit will once more regain its imperial place. Let consecrated genius take the pulpit; let it be free from those conventional restrictions and trammels of a mere

receiving the Law, Abraham and Isaac at the Foot of the Mountain, Paul's Shipwreck, Christ Rejected, and Death on the Pale Horse, by Da Vinci; Christ in the Garden, by Guido; the Fall of the Damned, and the Resurrection of the Just, by Rubens. Raphael, the first painter in the world, and who was employed so extensively by Leo X., painted chiefly scriptural subjects. His famous cartoons are all scriptural themes.

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"There is not a finer character, nor a finer description, in all the works of Sir Walter Scott than that of Rebekah in *Ivanhoe*. And who does not see that it owes its excellence to the Bible? Shakspeare, Byron, and Southey, are not a little indebted for some of their best scenes and inspirations to the same source. At the suggestion of a valued friend, I have turned my thoughts to the parallel between Macbeth and Ahab; between Lady Macbeth and Jezebel; between the announcement to Macduff of the murder of his family, and that to David of the death of Absalom by Joab; to the parallel between the opening of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and Byron's apostrophe to Rome as the Niobe of nations; to the parallel between his Ode to Napoleon, and Isaiah's ode on the fall of Sennacherib; and also to the resemblance between Southey's chariot of Carmala in the 'Curse of Kehama,' and Ezekiel's vision of the wheels: and have been forcibly impressed with the obligations of this class of writers to the sacred scriptures."—*Spring*.

technical theology, which make sermons proverbially *dull*, *narrow*, and *unpractical*; let it go with a free step into the great field of biblical truth, and see it everywhere radiating and glowing with mediatorial love, and feel that there is something there to meet the deepest experience of every living man, let it take every event that influences the public mind, and every question that agitates the common heart, whether social, political, or religious, and try it by the broad light of the Bible, *whose principles are ever in favour of popular rights*;—I say, let it do this, and the pulpit shall take the lead once more. Would not people crowd to the temple if they felt that there they would find the greatest minds, and the most philanthropic hearts, trying the great questions that agitate their spirits in every-day life by that Book which denounces oppression, recognizes the rights of all, and inculcates special sympathy with the poor and distressed?

II. WHY ARE WE TO AIM AT THE CHRISTIANIZATION OF LITERATURE? This is the other general question which demands our attention. Space requires that we should condense to the utmost our remarks. Without, therefore, dwelling upon the *great* reasons—namely, that our allegiance to God, our obligation to Christianity, and our relation to man, render it imperative—we shall proceed briefly to notice the following reasons:—

The first we draw from the *stupendous influence of literature*. There are two aspects in which we must look at the press, if we would form an adequate idea of its power upon the character and destiny of mankind. *It is the conductor of the past*; it links the present to all preceding times. It brings on this age the influence of all preceding ones. A book is a kind of ark, which bears down over the flood of centuries the seeds of the old world in which its author lived. On the streams of literature we see mirrored the institutions, philosophies, and habits of the men who have been carrying on the affairs of time from the beginning. Judea, Greece, and Rome, are brought down to us in books, and made to live their lif

and play their part again. Their virtues and their sins are reproduced. But not only is the press the conductor of the past; it is also the *mightiest engine of the present*. Modern society has no organ of influence comparable with it. It gives a kind of ubiquity to individual minds: through it the solitary thinker speaks to distant nations at the same time, makes his lonely voice vibrate through all lands, and resound through all times. As the breath of heaven bears the seed of autumn to spots where they shall germinate and grow, the press scatters the thoughts of men over the broad field of humanity, where they find a genial soil, and will yield a plenteous harvest in years to come. It is the great leveller. It knows no man after the flesh: rich and poor, bond and free, male and female—all are one in the great empire of thought. Tyrants have ever dreaded its power. Napoleon, once the terror of all Europe, laughed in the fiercest hurricane of war, but cowed in awe before the might of the pen. Its power, too, is ever on the increase. Already it forms and guides public opinion, influences the debates of senates, and changes the politics of nations. What can we do towards the moral civilization and salvation of the world, so long as this tremendous agent is not on our side?

The second reason we draw from the anti-Christian character of modern literature. All modern authors may be divided into three classes, in relation to Christianity. First. Those who have never introduced it into their works. These form a very large class—the largest. It is to us a wonderful mental phenomenon that men born here in England, educated in what are called *Christian* colleges and universities, should be able to write large volumes, and never make allusion to that religion which has confessedly made their country what she is. The literature of Greece and Rome is full of religion. The divinities appear and speak through all. The songs of poets, the narrations of annalists, the speeches of orators, and the philosophies of sages, are full of the gods. This is natural. The chief thing *in* the mind being the religious, and the chief thing *out* of it, the god, it is only natural to expect that the

chief feature in its productions should be religion. The second class of authors are those who introduce Christianity into their writings for a wrong purpose: some to undermine its authority, strip it of its supernaturalness, and explain away its divinity; others to aggrandize themselves—to adorn their tales, embellish their productions, and sell their books. The other class are those who introduce Christianity for a good purpose, but in a bad way; some in the way of whining sentimentality, others in the way of bitter polemics, and others in the way of cut-and-dried orthodoxy. Some of the most anti-Christian books are those written in the name of Christianity. Their narrow spirit, their vapid conceptions, their childish reasonings, their simpering, mawkish sentiment, and, withal, their arrogant assumptions; are these not miserable libels on the system of Jesus? and have they not done more to promote infidelity than books constructed for infidel purposes? Give me the book which makes no mention of Christianity, or the book that introduces it professedly to degrade it, rather than the book which seeks to promote it, but contains nothing of its grandeur of conception, freedom of spirit, and nobleness of soul. When we take, therefore, from modern literature these classes, what a small portion we have left that is at all suited to help on to the cause of truth, and raise the spiritual man to meet his fitting destiny! Besides this quantity of antagonistic book-literature, what an immense tide of periodical writing of the most deleterious description is flowing forth every hour through the very heart of the world! The sentiments they disseminate, like the fabled teeth of the dragon, spring up armed men to fight against the religious and the true. Is not this a potent reason for the pulpit to rouse itself to action in relation to the press? As long as we have all this against us we are, in our attempts to evangelize the world, like a frail bark struggling against a strong head wind and a surging tide.

Thirdly and lastly, another reason why we should set to heart and head work in this matter is the *supreme claims of Christianity*. She has the most absolute right to an ascendancy

over the world's mind: she is divinely commissioned, and divinely fitted to cast down imaginations, and everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. She has subjects that tower in sublimity above the highest genius; instructions for the most advanced intellect; principles that solve the deepest problems of our destiny; promises more than commensurate with the world's aspirations; a spirit infinitely transcending in freedom and love man's highest dictates of liberty or notions of good-will. The greatest minds have acknowledged her superiority. Paul had traversed the literary domains of the whole world; he had culled the choicest flowers from the writings of the Hebrew rabbis and Grecian literati; but when he entered the field of Christian discoveries, plucked the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley, all other flowers lost their fragrance and their beauty. "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

Let us seek to raise Christianity to a supreme dominion in literature, and thus hasten the period when the attributes of Christ shall adorn the hero of every tale, and His spirit be the music of every song; when history shall trace every event to his throne, and science and philosophy unite in His praise.

BOOKS.

"It is vanity to persuade the world one hath much learning by getting a great library. As soon shall I believe that every one is valiant that hath a well-furnished armoury. . . . Some books are only cursorily to be tasted of:—namely, first, voluminous books; the task of a man's life to read them over. Secondly, Auxiliary books; only to be referred to on occasions. Thirdly, Such as are mere pieces of formality, so that if you look on them you look through them; and he that peeps through the casement of the index, sees as much as if he were in the house. But the laziness of those cannot be excused, who peremptorily pass over authors of consequence, and only trade in their tables and contents. These, like City cheaters, having gotten the names of all country gentlemen, make silly people believe they have long lived in those places where they never were, and flourish with skill in those authors they never seriously studied."—*Thomas Fuller*.

The Pulpit in the Family ;

OR,

A DOMESTIC HOMILY ON BUILDING FOR ETERNITY.

“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”—1 Cor. iii. 11—15.

THERE are five lessons of an important and of an interesting character suggested by the context:—1. That men's undue admiration of their own proficiency in scientific knowledge, improper confidence in human reason as the only judge of truth, and the prevalence of animal passions, render them incapable of understanding and of relishing *spiritual things*. 2. That the existence of a party spirit, and of unnecessary divisions, in a religious community prove the persons constituting it to be far removed from the spiritual standard, and demonstrate the presence among them of a worldly and heathenish spirit. 3. That all the faithful servants of God—however unlike in their natural qualification, various in their acquired attainments, and diversified in their allotted spheres of operation—are united in one employment, responsible to one Master, and are seeking the realization of one and the same design. 4. That success in the spiritual world, as well as in temporal matters, must ever be attributed to the blessing of the great God—the First Cause of all life and energy—and that the consciousness of this fact should ever check the spirit of self-accusation on the one hand, and remove, on the other, every feeling of down-heartedness and despair. 5. That

when men lose sight of this great truth, they mistake the instruments for the heavenly agent, retard the progress of moral advancement, and make room for the growth and development of every feeling of vanity, and every species of dissension. The Corinthians had fallen to this state ; and the results were, that a spirit of jealousy and malignity had crept in, quarrels arose, parties were called by different names, and marshalled under different banners. Disorder and confusion everywhere reigned : the moral edifice, which was now fast advancing towards completion, was disfigured and laid waste, and upon that foundation, which had been laid with so much skill and care, a mass of incongruous and combustible materials had been heaped together, which could answer no other purpose than that of furnishing fuel for the flame of the last conflagration.

I. ALL CHRISTIAN MEN BUILD FOR ETERNITY UPON ONE AND THE SAME FOUNDATION. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Believers are here represented as the temple of God, and Christ as the Foundation of the whole fabric. The allusion is not to the *doctrine* of Christ. This doctrine may be the foundation of a theology, but not of a living church. Nor is Christ spoken of as the Foundation of a system of doctrine, but as the Foundation of the great spiritual edifice which was being constructed of all who believed the gospel. *Humanity needed a foundation upon which they might erect for immortality.* Sin had laid the world in a state of fearful ruin and moral desolation : it presented nowhere a covert upon the storm of God's displeasure, nor a shelter from the tempests of guilt and remorse. Before another temple could be constructed where safety and happiness could be enjoyed, a foundation must be procured firmer and broader than that which fallen nature could furnish. *How this could be secured baffled the loftiest intellect.* Human sagacity might suggest three ways—*penitence, reformation, intense sufferings.* But none of those, nor all united, could answer the purpose. *Jehovah, in the*

infinitude of his mercy, has supplied the want. A foundation has been laid in blood—a foundation sufficiently broad and deep to support the sinking hopes of a universe of fallen beings. When the incompetency of the law had been demonstrated, God sent his Son, and through him accomplished the mighty task—"laid in Zion a foundation"; and "he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." Christ has been held forth in all ages of the world, and in all the dispensations of Heaven, as the *Object* of faith and the *Basis* of human hopes. This destined foundation might be traced in the first promise that fell on the ear of guilt on the day of the fatal fall; in the bleeding victims daily immolated on Jewish altars; in the glowing predictions of ancient seers; and, at last, seen in all its magnitude, as laid bare by the hands of the evangelists and the apostles. Now, all Christians build upon this foundation. As Christ is the foundation of the great universal temple of God, so is he the Foundation of each believer: he forms the groundwork of every individual building. In this respect all the true are alike; there is no exception. It matters not in what clime they have fixed their dwelling—by what form of government they are controlled—to what race they may belong—by what colour they may be distinguished—they rely alike upon Christ's mediatorial work as the grand cause of their justification, and the efficient means of their complete redemption. National antipathies may prevent the commingling of their sympathies; confusion of languages may check the free interchange of thoughts and the hearty blending of feelings; denominational peculiarities and sectarian differences may rear their lofty heads among them, and cast their gloomy shadows across them; mighty rivers may run, wide oceans may roll, and vast continents may intervene between them; yet they meet on this common ground. In Christ they are one. Around him, as their common centre, they revolve; on him, as their common support, they repose. The branches meet in the same trunk—the veins in the same heart—the streams in the same fountain head.

II. WHILE ALL CHRISTIAN MEN BUILD UPON ONE AND THE SAME FOUNDATION, THEY NEVERTHELESS GREATLY DIFFER IN THE MATERIALS WHICH THEY USE IN THE ERECTION OF THE BUILDING. There are some who build on this foundation "gold, silver, and precious stones." The superstructure which they rear is of a magnificent, costly, and glorious character, 'The materials here spoken of are emblematical of *preciousness, purity, solidity, and permanency*. There are some characters formed of elements so pure and indestructible as the principles upon which they are reared. The doctrines believed by the intellect are scriptural; the feelings cherished by the heart are holy; the objects embraced by the affections are pure; the outward deportment, in its various aspects and diversified relationships, is in strict accordance with the requirements of justice and love. 'The materials which they employ in the construction of the fabric are as imperishable as the foundation itself. There are others who use very different materials: they build on the same foundation "wood, hay, and stubble," materials which are *perishable, corrupt, and comparatively worthless*. Instead of erecting, as they might, a gorgeous palace, adapted to withstand the fury of the elements and the ravages of time, and fitted to attract the notice and elicit the admiration of all spectators, they build a mean rustic cottage, or a contemptible hovel, made of planks of wood roughly put together, thatched with hay and stubble, which will be levelled with the dust by the first storm that may beat upon it, or consumed to ashes by the first spark that may fall upon it. The opinions which they hold are erroneous—the spirit which they cultivate is selfish—the feelings which they foster are carnal—the high-sounding professions they make are empty sounds—their practices incompatible with the requirements of holiness and love;—and as outward actions must ever flow from the impulse of the whole mental and moral condition, while they work under a wrong impression and impure motives for themselves, they never can labour differently from others.

III. THERE IS A PERIOD TO ARRIVE IN WHICH THESE MATERIALS SHALL BE REVEALED IN THEIR TRUE NATURE, AND TRIED BY THE SEVEREST TEST. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be made manifest by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." The day referred to is clearly the Day of Judgment. Such mighty work and stupendous results can be attributed to no other day. That such a day will arrive we are repeatedly assured by scripture testimony, and that in words the most distinct and emphatic. "God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world," &c. This passage may be regarded as a type of numbers besides. But, independent of revelation, we have many evidences confirmatory of this truth which appear strong and conclusive. There is *analogy*. Every thing here tends to a final close. All nature moves on gradually, but progressively, towards a solemn and an ultimate crisis. The vegetable world—the animal kingdom—political fabrics—social institutions—the productions of human skill and prowess—earth's lofty mountains, and the ocean's majestic rocks, bear on their brow palpable evidences of age, and unmistakeable indications of decay. The universe itself is marching on towards dissolution. There are the *aspirations* and the *forebodings of humanity*. A voice has ever emanated from the innermost recesses of man's moral nature, testifying that guilt at some period must suffer, and innocence rejoice. The very twilight of this day—as lighted up by conscience and imagination—has not unfrequently caused even heartless despots and Pagan oppressors turn pale and shudder, and feel themselves ineffably wretched amid all their stately grandeur, and the adulations of their numberless sycophants. Amidst the most sumptuous banquets, and the merriest convivial assemblies, where the charms of beauty, the harmony of music, and the richest productions of nature and art, were contributing their utmost towards the consummation of mortal happiness, the appearance of a mysterious handwriting on the wall of conscience has oftentimes struck terror to the bravest heart, wrung an outcry

of terror from the most daring spirit, blasted every enjoyment, and thrown over the whole scene a pall as gloomy as death and black as despair. The thought of this day, in every age, has, like a spectre, haunted the guilty, and, like an angel of paradise, has cheered the innocent. So universal is this conviction, that it must have formed a part of God's original revelation to man, or it must constitute a very important portion of man's moral being. There is the *moral character of God*. Every idea we have of God, however wide and obscure, leads us to invest him with moral perfections. Amidst those, wisdom and justice occupy a prominent part. From the existence of these, we instinctively infer that there must be a day of retribution: things cannot be allowed to continue for ever as they now exist. So many things are now allowed to transpire that cause a revulsion to our moral feelings, and loudly demand correction. How often the intrigues of guilt prosper, and oppression triumphs, while virtue is trodden in the dust. The present scene is far from being one of order, or of justice. There must be another day in which that which is now wrong shall be rectified, and that which is now imperfect completed. "*Fire*" is the terrible element in which that decisive day shall reveal itself. This is in perfect conformity with many other passages. Often are we told that the world shall be destroyed by fire, and that the solemnities of the dreaded day of account shall be ushered in by a universal conflagration. It is here to be understood figuratively, so far as it applies to human character. Natural fire has no more power to reveal character and test moral elements, than reason has to discover a darksome dungeon or an argument to assay chemical properties: it will try no soul in the last day, nor scathe a single soul in perdition. But as fire sheds light on all around, discloses the nature of the objects within its compass, and tests the qualities of physical properties to which it may be applied, so will the light and the fearful scrutiny of the last day reveal every man in his true person, and test his real character. The records of Omniscience shall be unfolded, the secrets of the heart shall

be revealed, the nature of every action shall be investigated and proclaimed, and it shall be clearly shown, and eternally determined, what was genuine and what was false. This will be the grand trial of trials—the final assizes of the universe—the eternal and irrevocable settlement of the destinies of humanity. Christian men have had to pass through trials here. Affliction has shattered their frames—disappointment has blasted their expectations—adversity has withered their hopes—bereavements have lacerated their affections—persecution has poured upon them its fury; and all these were designed and adapted to prove them. But they were not to be compared with this last great trial. Friend, amidst the light of the burning world, the revelations of the Judgment Day, and the terrors of the awful scene, under the blazing throne of the Judge, with the all-piercing eye of Omniscience steadily fixed upon thee, thy character shall be seen, a righteous judgment pronounced upon thee, and thy doom unalterably fixed.

IV. THE BUILDING CONSTRUCTED OF PURE MATERIALS WILL ABIDE THE TEST, HOWEVER SEVERE, AND THE BUILDER HIMSELF BE ADEQUATELY RECOMPENSED. “If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.” *The work of the wise builder is indestructible.* As it regards himself: the sentiments which he holds, the feelings which he cherishes, the spirit which he cultivates, and the outward forms which he observes, are in harmony with the laws of heaven. As it regards others: the doctrines which he teaches, the views which he inculcates, the practices which he recommends, and the observances which he enforces, are right and scriptural. As a necessary consequence, the fabric erected of such materials cannot but abide. It encountered many a violent blast, it withstood many a fierce assault, while in the course of erection, but it survived them all; and now, appearing in all its symmetrical beauty and fair proportions, completed for eternity, it stands forth in bold defiance of any element of destruction that can be applied to it as the final

test. The mountain torrent may sweep around its basis, but, having been built upon a rock, it has nothing to dread. The tempest may beat upon it, the lightning may play around it, and the destructive element may enfold it in its embrace, but, having been constructed of imperishable materials, it can sustain no injury. "It abides." The law has no thunder that can shake it, the judgment has no lightning that can scathe it. Eternity has no force that can demolish it. The heavens may pass away with a great noise, the elements may melt with fervent heat, and the earth also, and the works that are therein may be burned up, and physical changes may occur in God's universe, the bare thought of which would now strike the boldest and most speculative astronomer with awe and astonishment; yet this spiritual edifice shall remain untouched. Having been erected upon the same principles as those upon which the throne of the Eternal stands, their period of duration will be analogous. *The builder shall be rewarded.* His fellow-creatures, possibly, treated him with disdain, and heaped much contempt upon his wise, faithful, and self-denying labours. It matters not; he is now amply repaid. His reward will be a reward of *grateful recollection—inward satisfaction—remunerative labour—public approval—Divine recompense.* The reward shall be *in proportion to the work done.* "Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour." Heaven will be what we make it on earth. As we weave so shall be our crown; as we build so shall be our house; as we sow so shall be our harvest. The pleasures of memory, the commendation of conscience, the remunerative return of labour, the approving admiration of others, and the gracious recompense of God, will bear a strict analogy to the purity of our goodness, the fervour of our zeal, the self-denial of our sacrifices, the unweariness of our diligence, and the perseverance of our resolute activity in the present life.

V. THE BUILDING CONSTRUCTED OF PERISHABLE MATERIALS SHALL BE CONSUMED—THE BUILDER SUSTAIN LOSS,

BUT WITH DIFFICULTY SAVED. "If any man's work shall be burned," &c. The very idea of erecting "hay, wood, and stubble" upon an everlasting foundation was highly imprudent. What could be more incongruous, or more indicative of misplaced labour? However, such a building cannot stand; the investigations of the last day are more than it can bear. The application of the testing element to such combustible materials will, with the rapidity of lightning, wrap it in flames, and reduce it to ashes. The fabric, while it was being reared, attracted considerable notice, and elicited many an expression of commendation and praise, but it is now proved that it was all worthless and wrong. The doctrines to which the individual held so tenaciously, and for the rejection of which he pursued others with such a vindictive spirit, were nothing but airy phantoms of his own creation, or the exploded dogmas of ignorance and superstition. The fervour which glowed so dazzlingly in his unwearied exertions was nothing but a zeal for sect, and a desire for the triumph of party. The love which seemed to burn like a seraphic flame in his devotional engagements was nothing but an excited passion, or a strong animal feeling. The elevated emotions of apparently pure and disinterested love were nothing but the kindlings of an ardent imagination. The various acts of Christian benevolence which gave his history an angelic tinge were nothing but the offspring of vanity and the love of human applause; and all the good which he appeared to accomplish, and in which he so often prided himself, was like the motives from which it proceeded—unsound and perishable. As a consequence, "HE SHALL SUFFER LOSS." *Loss of labour.* All that he had done, with one exception, had been done in vain. His life is now almost a blank, his history well-nigh a nonentity. *Loss of inward satisfaction.* There was but one thing he ever did that he can look upon approvingly; he fixed upon the *right foundation*. He might have reared upon it a durable building. The power was in his possession, and the materials were within his reach, but he wasted his time and energy in another way. There must be a considerable destitution of tranquillity

within. *Loss of hope and expectation.* He expected his labour to be accepted by his Judge, and rewarded accordingly. He is now stripped of all such anticipations. *Loss of reward.* The recompense which otherwise would be awarded must now be withheld. A reward can never be given but in connexion with service rendered. This loss will be *everlasting in its effects*; it shall be a detriment to him to all eternity. The consciousness will ever accompany him, even in heaven, that he might have been elevated to a higher eminence, raised to superior bliss, exalted to a higher rank. There will be an undying conviction ever dwelling in his breast that his song might have been sweeter, his crown brighter, and his seat nearer the Eternal throne. **HE HIMSELF SHALL BE SAVED.** The groundwork abides upon which he has been erecting, and, in virtue of this, he is safe. His work shall perish, but his choice of the right foundation shall stand. There were much error and imperfection blended with all he did, yet, in virtue of the connexion which subsists between him and the great Redeemer, he is safe. His errors and defects shall be removed—his labours shall be destroyed—he shall suffer loss—he shall occupy a lower place in heaven, yet he shall be safe. There has been one truth, amid all the perversions and corruptions of ignorance and superstition, triumphantly preserved;—it rode gallantly, like an ark of safety, over the tempestuous billows of religious contention and strife, ready to take up the shipwrecked soul; it shone brightly, like a lovely but a lonely star in the religious firmament, amid all the dark and stormy nights of bigotry and ignorance;—that truth is, that *faith*, which connects the soul with Christ as the Foundation, is alone the condition of salvation. “Believe, and thou shalt be saved.” The degree of salvation stands in proportion to the degree of moral excellence which the man attains, but salvation itself depends on faith in Christ. **HE SHALL BE SAVED WITH DIFFICULTY.** “Yet so as by fire.”

The sensations felt will be painful, and the hazard run will be great. To see the building destroyed must create some apprehensions as to the firmness of the foundation. The

situation of the man who rushes through the flames when his house is on fire, for the purpose of saving his life, is not an enviable one. There is salvation, but not without great difficulty, fear, and peril. He who is thus saved is “snatched out of the fire”—“a firebrand plucked out of the burning.”

Friend, what are the materials of which you are constructing your building? Are they such that can bear the trying elements of your probationary state, and abide the severe test of the judgment-day? or are they of a worthless and perishable character, that even now attract the frown of God’s disapprobation, and that will ultimately be consumed to ashes? Having fixed upon an imperishable foundation, it is a matter of supreme importance that the edifice reared upon it should partake of the same character. Take care that there be a congruity and a fitness between the basis and the fabric; as the former is broad, deep, and immoveable, let the latter be stately, magnificent, and indestructible. Remember that there is a possibility of building a wretched cottage upon the best and firmest foundation, which every wind will shake, and which the least fire will soon consume. Feel that you are erecting for eternity, and that your dearest and most lasting interests are involved in the undertaking; realize the thought of the constant watching of an omniscient Eye; live in the contemplation of the great day of trial; ever carry with you the conviction, as each addition is made to the superstructure, that “every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.”

D. EVANS.

Germ of Thought.

Analysis of Homily the Sixty-ninth.

“And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of,” &c.—
GEN. xxviii. 12—18.

THE number and state of man's faculties determine the extent and character of his universe. Had he fewer and weaker faculties, the outward creation would have fewer qualities and smaller dimensions, and contrariwise. We see more in the outward creation than the other sentient tenants of this earth, because we have a greater variety of faculty. We see far less, probably, than other beings, because we possess not the variety and extent of their capacity. Were we to be invested with some new faculty, or were some existing faculty now dormant to be called into action, our outward sphere of being would spread out its proportions, put on new forms of beauty, and teem with new life. Even now the magnifying lens gives us new worlds. Here modesty becomes us in predicting what is, and what is not. Our experience measures not a millionth-part of the universe; or, in the cant language of the day, the “objective” will ever stretch in immeasurable districts beyond the limits of the “subjective.”

These remarks are suggested by the *vision* of the patriarch. Here alone, at Bethel, in the stillness of the night, with stones for his pillow, and naught but the sable heavens for his cover-

ing, he witnesses scenes and hears voices which transcend the ordinary experience of mankind.

Regarding this mental vision not as an ordinary dream, but as a *divine* revelation, we shall view it as an illustration of *the true vision of life*.

SUBJECT :—*Bethel ; or, the True Vision of Life.*

1. IN THE TRUE VISION OF LIFE THERE IS A RECOGNITION OF OUR CONNEXION WITH OTHER WORLDS. "And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven ; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." The patriarch discovered, in his vision, that the world in which he lived was closely related to other worlds, and that there were the constant interjourneyings of celestial beings going on between other systems and the lonely spot on which he rested his wearied frame. The Bible is full of this doctrine. The pages of scripture are almost as full of angels as those of Homer are of gods. They reveal much concerning their *natures, capacities, characters, classes, numbers, ministries, and state*.

Whilst there is nothing in nature, philosophy, or experience, contradictive of the doctrine that *the intelligences of other worlds have a connexion with man*, there is much that is confirmative. *There is analogy*. It would seem that the *material* system is everywhere related ; that the members of the human body are not more inseparably connected with each other than are the most distant planets and systems of immensity. There is a "ladder"—a *vinculum*—connecting every atom of this little earth with every atom of the remotest world of God, and there are influences ever passing to and fro. Is it to be supposed, then, that there is no connexion between the various parts of the spiritual universe ?—that there is no "ladder" of intercourse between the various parts of the mental creation ? that whilst dead atoms can send their influence into worlds which no telescope can reach, living and ever-active spirits exert no influence beyond the boundary of their local home ? *There is general impression*. Men in all ages have displayed

a tendency to believe in their connexion with super-mundane existences. Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, believed in a mysterious connexion with invisible beings. Children indicate the tendency, so do the uncultivated everywhere. Yes, and some of the greatest philosophers of antiquity : Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle held the faith. *There are unaccountable impulses.* Probably there are few, if any, who have not been conscious of sudden thoughts and feelings which they could trace to no cause, and explain by no known law of mind. They have not been produced, but imported ; they are felt to be strangers, not offspring ; we seem to be their thoroughfare, not their home ; yet they have influenced us—prompted us to take some momentous step—for nothing wields such a mastery over us as *thought*. May it not be that these *unaccountable* thoughts come from other worlds ?

Regarding this biblical doctrine, then, as an indisputable fact—thus supported by a number of independent considerations—ought it not to be realized ? Can that be a true view or vision of life which shuts it out ? How blind is he who lives every moment in a kingdom of spirits, where intelligences of distant worlds are ever about his path, and yet sees nothing but *earth* !—lives in earth, works in earth, and dies in earth ! who is “ of the earth earthy.”

“ Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep :
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold,
Both night and day.”

II. IN THE TRUE VISION OF LIFE THERE IS A RECOGNITION OF GOD'S RELATION TO ALL. “ And behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac,” &c. Here the great God is presented in two aspects :—First. *As the Sovereign of all.* “ The Lord stood *above* the ladder.” Let that “ ladder ” stand as the representative of *secondary causes*, and then we have suggested the great truth that God is above all *instrumentalities* and *moral agents*. He was above the ladder and the angels. However

long the chain of secondary causes may be, God is over all ; there is not a link that he does not command, nor is there “an angel”—an agent—which steps on any stair of that great ladder of instrumentalities, who is not under his control. He is the Spirit in every wheel of Nature’s grand machine. “He is over all, God blessed for evermore.” The other aspect in which the great God is here presented is, secondly, *as the Friend of man*. “The Lord God of Abraham,” &c. The blessings here promised to the patriarch were, in reality, blessings for *humanity*. In the “seed” here promised you have the great prophets, reformers, and philanthropists of the world—the men without whom the world would have been a pandemonium ; you have, in sooth, the SAVIOUR “of all men, especially of them who believe.” The right idea of life, the true theory of virtue, the correct system of worship, the effectual means of spiritual quickening and development—SALVATION—all come through the Jew. Two things show that God is the friend of man :—First. *Man’s continuation as a sinner in such a world as this*. The transgressor of human laws is deprived of his liberty, is often bound in chains, and immured in dungeons, and denied all luxuries and comforts. But see the transgressor of divine laws. Behold the beautiful world in which they live, and the rich and varied blessings that fall in copious showers upon their path ! This is not the treatment of justice, but of MERCY. Second. *The special means introduced for his moral restoration*. The mediation of Christ—the gospel ministry—the Holy Spirit.

The man, then, who has the true vision of life sees God everywhere. He does not regard the *world* as a huge conglomeration of blind forces acting apart from any presiding Intelligence, but as the organ of an Infinite mind—as an exquisite machine, with God’s hand upon the spring of every movement. He sees God above the “ladder” directing every angel—yes, and every force—that either ascends or descends along the mystic steps. Nor does he regard *man* either as too mean for the Divine notice, or as bereft of Divine love—a

pitiful orphan or an adjudged reprobate—but as the special object of heavenly care and help.

III. IN THE TRUE VISION OF LIFE THERE IS THE RECOGNITION OF A DIVINE PROVIDENCE OVER INDIVIDUALS. “And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest,” &c. I am not merely with the universe, and with humanity in general, but with THEE; and not with thee in some places and occasionally, but “in all places whither thou goest.” That this is a doctrine of the Bible is too manifest to require a citation of passages in proof. This biblical doctrine agrees, first, *with reason*. Is it not reasonable to suppose that he who condescended to create the individual will deign to watch over him?—that he who endowed him with a soul capable of producing thoughts to shake kingdoms, form new empires, and influence generations, will superintend its operations? Is it reasonable to suppose that the infinite Father, who is the Fountain of all love, will desert his offspring? Secondly, *It agrees with consciousness*. The terrors of remorse, the prayers of distress, the sense of guilt, all show an underlying feeling, on man’s part, that God is with him *individually*.

IV. IN THE TRUE VISION OF LIFE THERE IS THE RECOGNITION OF THE SOLEMNITY OF OUR EARTHLY POSITION. “How dreadful is this place!” Feelings of reverence and awe came over him of which he had never been conscious before. What gave him this solemn feeling? The discovery that God was in the place; that he was in God’s “house,” and at the very gate of heaven; standing on the very boundary of the spiritual universe, at the very door through which spirits were passing to and fro. This discovery, first, *introduced a new epoch into his history*. “And I knew it not.” I never felt that God and the spiritual universe were so contiguous before. What was now with him had always been with him. From infancy to that hour, step by step, God had been with him: the very

world in which he lived was the "house" of God, ever filled with his presence, but he did not *know* it until now. And thus it is with the millions of mankind: God is ever with them; in every step they take they walk in his holy house. He is with them in the market, in the field, in the chamber of repose, and in the haunts of pleasure, but they know it not. Hence their want of solemnity, their frivolity of spirit, and their wicked ways. When the conviction of God's presence penetrates them the whole aspect of life is changed: they wake up from the past life as from a dream, and exclaim, Behold, God "is in this place; and I knew it not!" This is the dawn of a new era in their experience. Henceforth they will tread the earth as the temple of God, with a serious step and a worshipping heart. The discovery, secondly, *introduced a memorable epoch in his life*. "And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it." This was for a memorial. This, indeed, is the most memorable crisis in a man's life. It is a birth into a new spiritual world; it is the first step in the line of endless progress. It was a wonderful event in the life of that man who was born blind, when Christ opened his eyes. Though the earth around him had always been robed in beauty, and the glorious heavens had always been pouring their radiance on his path, he had never seen earth nor sky before. With the opening of his eyes, he must have felt himself ushered into a new existence. But when God opens the moral eye of man so that he sees him everywhere, it is a far greater and sublimer change. The man will never forget this; he will rear pillars in his soul to commemorate the fact.

Such is the true vision of life. What Jacob saw in a dream every man should see in every moment of his wakeful life. Are we not as truly with God and in the spiritual world now as we shall ever be? Is there a world more truly his "house" than this? Is not this a thoroughfare of spirits? All we

want is the opening of the spiritual eye which sin has closed. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

Analysis of Homily the Seventieth.

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."—HEB. ii. 10.

SUBJECT:—*The Refuting Power of Truth.*

AMONGST the many remarkable features of revelation stands its *refuting power*. Sometimes a single sentence contains a confutation of numerous popular and perilous errors. You have only to elicit the truth which it involves, and certain false notions and theories will pass away as the night-clouds before the solar rays.

This is strikingly the case with the passage before us, especially when we adopt Stuart's version,* which we consider to be a more faithful exponent of the apostle's meaning. The following are the errors of which it is a refutation:—

I. IT REFUTES THE ERROR THAT THE UNIVERSE IS EITHER ETERNAL OR THE WORK OF CHANCE. The text speaks of One who is the *Cause* and *End* of all things; by whom are all things, and to whom are all things. That Being is God. The Bible does not condescend to argue the fact of the Divine existence; it properly assumes that which is amongst the most *primary* and *profound* beliefs of humanity.

* "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, through sufferings, to bestow the highest honour upon the Captain of their salvation, who is leading many sons to glory."—*Stuart*.

II. IT REFUTES THE ERROR THAT CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS ARE INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE DIVINE CHARACTER. This error is well stated and met by Gilfillan in his lecture on the "Christian Bearings of Astronomy." The individual who arrogantly states that it is impossible to believe that that God who made a universe so great, that this earth, in comparison with it, is less than one of the smallest atoms in comparison with itself, should so connect himself with the suffering nature of one of the tribes of this atom earth, as the Bible states, should remember that, whilst *magnitude* is nothing to *infinity*, and *locality* is nothing to *immensity*, that the interests of morality are everything to justice, and the happiness of being is everything to benevolence. Nothing, therefore, can philosophically be shown to be *inconsistent* with the greatness of God but *injustice* and *cruelty*, the opposite of which you have in God's connexion with Christ. "It became him," &c.

III. IT REFUTES THE ERROR THAT GREAT SUFFERINGS HERE, IN THE CASE OF INDIVIDUALS, IMPLY GREAT SINS. It is true, in general, that sufferings imply sins somewhere, but it is not true always in individual cases. This was the error into which Job's friends fell; the error, too, into which those fell who told Christ of those "whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices." This is a popular error. The fact that Christ suffered is a refutation of it. He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.

IV. IT REFUTES THE ERROR THAT GREAT HONOURS CAN BE OBTAINED WITHOUT GREAT TRIAL. "It became God," says the text, "through *suffering*, to bestow the highest honour upon the Captain of their salvation." Had he not suffered, he would not have been exalted "as a Prince and a Saviour." Through Gethsemane and over Calvary he reached the Throne.

The expecting of great things without great trial and struggle is a prevalent and perilous error. A man may come into possession of wealth and titles without effort and struggles, but he will never reach any *true* honours without it. *Intel-*

lectual dignity—the dignity of a vigorous, orderly, enlightened, and majestic understanding—can never be reached but through much study, which is a weariness to the flesh. *Moral dignity*—the dignity of self-command, breadth of sympathy, purity of heart, nobleness of aim, and friendship with heaven—can only be reached by an earnest and protracted struggle. There is no kingdom for man worth having that is not reached “through much tribulation.”

V. IT REFUTES THE ERROR THAT THE GRAND END OF CHRISTIANITY IS TO CONNECT MAN WITH DOGMATIC SYSTEMS OF ECCLESIASTICAL CONSTITUTIONS. This is what the sceptic affirms. This is, alas! what the conduct of professors too frequently applies. But this is not the *grand* end. It is true that certain things must be believed before the end can be reached. But the end is higher: it is to bring men not to creeds or churches, but “to glory”—a glory *spiritual—divine—ever-progressive*.

VI. IT REFUTES THE ERROR THAT THERE ARE BUT FEW THAT SHALL BE SAVED. There are some who have the idea that none will be saved but those who belong to their own little sect. Perish the notion! The text tells us that the Captain of our salvation “is leading MANY souls to glory;” *many*, not a few. How many? Compute the stars of heaven: reckon the sands on ocean’s shore. *The infinite love of God—the illimitable provisions of redeeming mercy—the slow but certain progress of truth in the world—the manifest probability that the human race is but in its infancy, and that the generations that have appeared on this globe are but very few in comparison with those that are to follow;—all these things, in connexion with the Bible, lead us to hope that the lost to the saved will be but as units to millions.*

Analysis of Homily the Seventy-first.

“For it is written, That Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar,” &c.—GAL. iv. 22—31.

SUBJECT:—*Paul's Allegory; or, the Religion of Law and the Religion of Love Contrasted.*

THE distinction between a *law*-religion and a *love*-religion is broad and radical. The religion of law is chiefly concerned with the *code*, the letter of duty. Its disciples measure their obligation by the written precept; they move and pause with the letter as the Israelite did with the mystic pillar of old, They do not steal, nor kill, nor outwardly break the Sabbath, because they find a written prohibition. Were it possible to blot out the writing, or to convince them that it had not the Divine signature, they would feel their obligation considerably reduced. On the contrary, those who have the religion of love think more of the *Lawgiver* than the law. Their filial affection induces them to *anticipate* their Father's commandment. Were the written decalogue abrogated, they would not be less holy. They are in love with the *Lawgiver*, and, sympathetically, every feeling pulsates, and every power moves, with him; *subjectively*, they are “not under law, but under grace.”

The grand object of the apostle, in this epistle, is to expose the worthlessness of a mere *law*-religion. It would seem that some Judaizing teachers had entered the Galatian church, and endeavoured to reproduce the old law-spirit—to enthrone the “letter” once more. After a variety of argument and expostulation on the subject, our apostle proceeds to illustrate the advantage of the love-religion enjoined by the *gospel* over the law-religion enjoined by the *code*, by a reference to the two sons of Hagar and Sarah. He does not say that Hagar and Sarah, with the son of each, were raised up to prefigure

that whereof he speaks, but he uses it as an "allegory"*—an illustration of the grand subject in hand. We regard him as using Sarah and Hagar to represent the two grand outward economies—the law and the gospel; and Isaac and Ishmael to represent the two grand inward religious states—the legal and the loving; which these outward economies respectively produced.

Let us now proceed to indicate the contrasts between the religion of law and that of love, which this "allegory" suggests.

I. THERE IS A CONTRAST BETWEEN THEIR EXTERNAL CAUSES. Both these inward spiritual states have an outward cause. The mind is ever dependent upon the outward for its suggestions and development. There is but one mind in the universe that can live upon itself, and that is the mind of God. As Hagar was the mother of Ishmael, so "mount Sinai, in Arabia," the law, is the instrumental cause of the legal religion; and as Sarah was the mother of Isaac, so "Jerusalem, which is above," the gospel, is the instrumental cause of this love-religion. It is not easy to see the reason the apostle had for making one woman to represent the law and the other the gospel, but it is easy to see why he regarded one system as "engendering" bondage, and the other as producing spiritual freedom. The grand point of contrast between the two systems is this—*the one appeals to fear, the other to love*. In the one system the earth quakes beneath you, "the thick cloud" overshadows you, thunders peal around you, and terrible lightnings dart from every point of heaven. "So terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." In the other system the sun shines brightly, "and

* An allegory is "a figurative sentence or discourse, in which the principal subject is described by another subject resembling it in its properties and circumstances. The principal subject is thus kept out of view, and we are left to collect the intention of the writer or speaker by the resemblance of the secondary to the primary subject. Allegory is in words what hieroglyphics are in painting. We find an example of an allegory in the eightieth psalm."—*Webster*.

all the air is love." He who rolls the awful thunders in the law speaks with the "still, small voice" in the gospel. He does not strive nor cry, nor does any man hear his voice in the streets; a bruised reed does he not break, nor does he quench the smoking flax. Here he speaks in the soft, the touching, the wooing voice of love. There is everything in Christianity to attract the deepest affection, encourage the most entire confidence, and to inspire the highest hopes.

II. THERE IS A CONTRAST BETWEEN THEIR INTERNAL QUALITIES. First. *The one is ordinary, the other is special.* "He who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise."* It is a common thing for thee to tremble at the denunciations of law, and, from fear and selfishness, to attend mechanically to the letter of duty—to do outwardly those things which thy conscience tells thee will appease an offended Deity, and deliver thee from hell. This is according to the ordinary run of things. Chapels and churches are crowded with persons thus acting. But to be moved in everything by *love*; to lose all controlling ideas of rewards and punishments, heavens and hells, in the great idea of Divine excellence; to regard duty as a gratification rather than a work; is a state of mind which, like the birth of Isaac, is a production *uncommon* and *special*ly divine. It is born "by promise." Secondly. *The one is slavish, the other is free.* The law is "in bondage with her children." The men of *precept* rather than *principle*, of letter rather than spirit, can never have true freedom. They will have "the spirit of bondage." But they who are inspired with love will ever be free: their meat and drink will be to do the will

* "But there was a great difference between them; for *he (who was born) of Hagar, the bond-woman*—that is, Ishmael—was born only according to the flesh, and produced in the common order of nature, without any particular promise of God, or any unusual interposition of His power and providence; whereas, *he who was born of Sarah, the free woman*—that is, Isaac—(was born) by virtue of the promise."—DODRIDGE.

of God. When love enlarges the heart, men will run in the way of God's commandments. Obedience, in their case, will be a spontaneous and an involuntary soaring of the soul. "As," says Vinet, "the waves of a river, once impelled in the direction of the channel, do not require every moment a new impulse to continue therein, so the life which has received the impulse of love is borne away entire, with rapid waves, towards the ocean of the Divine will, where it loves to be swallowed up and lost." Thirdly. *The one is persecuting, the other is kind.* "But, as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." It was said of Ishmael, by the angel, before his birth, that he should be "a wild man, whose hand should be against every man, and every man's hand should be against him." This language implies that he was an overbearing and intolerant man. Well does Paul, therefore, put him as the type of all the mere law on letter religionists. The history of the Church shows that the narrow sectarians, the intolerant bigots, the acrimonious controversialists, the bloody persecutors, have all been but *letter-religionists*. So it is; and so, from the nature of things, it must ever be. But "the children of the promise"—men of deep, broad, loving, Christ-like sympathies—never persecute either in word or deed. Instead of seeking to punish intellectual heretics, they address them with all the corrective arguments and expostulations of love; they talk of the enemies of the cross of Christ "even weeping."

III. THERE IS A CONTRAST BETWEEN THEIR FUTURE HISTORIES. First. *The one is to increase, the other is not.* "For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband." Whatever might be the primary application of these words, as used by the prophet, it appears clear that Paul quotes them in order to express the idea that the children of the gospel—the love-religionists—would become far more numerous than the children of the law, the letter-religionists. Calvary shall

be more productive than Sinai—Jesus shall have more followers than Moses. The men of deep, genuine, imperial, Christian sympathies and free souls shall outnumber in the Church the men of technicalities and precept. We have not yet arrived at this period; indeed, we seem far, far away from it. But we will live and die in the hope of better and brighter days. Secondly. *The one is to be expelled, the other is not.* “Cast out the bond-woman and her son.” Away with the law-element as a motive of action! Let Judaism, in all its elements, be expelled from the Church! Paul did cast out it from his own heart. “What things were gain to me, these I counted loss,” &c. But why should this law-element in religion be cast out? 1. *Because there is no virtue in it.* A complete correspondence of the outward conduct with the written law, without love, would be destitute of all virtue. 2. *Because there is no moral power in it.* Your men of letters are weak. Your men of spirit are ever strong. 3. *Because there is no happiness in it.* The religion of such men is a drudgery and a burden.

Let us cast it out, then—cast it out from our churches, with all its dogmatisms and formalities, verbal polemics, and base servilities—so that our temples may become the home of great, free, loving, Christ-inspired souls. Let us cast it out from our hearts. Let us seek to be “filled with the Spirit” rather than with the letter.

Analysis of Homily the Seventy-second.

“And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him.”—JUDGES xvi. 20.

THE history of this Jewish Hercules is as wonderful as any of the imaginative creations of romance. He appears before us as a prodigy of strength—not intellectual nor moral, but

physical brute force. His stupendous feats were those of body, not of soul—of muscle, not of mind. There are four facts which his history brings prominently under our notice:—First. *That God has respect to the emergencies of his people.* The Jews were oppressed by the Philistines, and stood ever in fear of them. Samson is raised up to break their power, and to humble their pride. God could have accomplished this, undoubtedly, without any instrumentality, or he could have raised up a *host* of men rather than *one*, who could inflict his judgments upon the Philistines; but we think there was great wisdom in fitting *one* for it. 1. It served as a more impressive manifestation of Divine power; and, 2, it served to humble and pour a greater contempt upon the enemy. Another fact which the history of this extraordinary man develops is, secondly, *that moral feebleness may co-exist with the highest physical energy.* Here is a man who could strangle the furious lion, and slay a thousand men single-handed, too weak to govern his own passions—the mere creature of lusts—the dupe and victim of a crafty woman. Many giants in body are dwarfs in soul. Many who have slain an army have been slain by their own lusts. Thirdly, *His history shows that great physical strength is not the highest good of man.* Men have always been proud to glory in their *might*. In the case of Sampson, the Almighty for once furnishes the world with a striking example, that great muscular energy, apart from moral goodness, is of little worth. Look at the misery to which he was reduced—blinded, deluded, destroyed. Fourthly. *His history shows that one man, through God, can accomplish great things.* What wonders did God do through Samson! Moses, Elijah, Paul, Luther, and many more, are examples of the fact.

SUBJECT:—*Samson; or, Man's Power for God's Work.*

The text leads us to infer—

I. THAT IT IS DERIVED FROM A SPECIAL CONNEXION WITH GOD. No less than four times, in the history of this man, do

we find his strength referred to "the Spirit of God." Some ridicule the idea of Samson performing the feats ascribed to him, but when the philosophical truth is remembered, *that all power comes from God*, the scorn turns to the shame and confusion of its author. This is true not only of physical, but also of intellectual and moral power.

It is to its MORAL application that we desire here to direct special attention. We read of the Spirit of the Lord being with good men of old—with the prophets and the apostles—and is promised to be with the good always. 1. *God is in a good man morally.* He dwells in him as the favourite author dwells in the mind of the devoted reader. The mind of a good man has more of God's mind in it than any other. God's thoughts live in his intellect, God's love glows in his heart: he is filled with all the fulness of God. 2. *That God is with a good man operationally.* The man who is filled with God's sentiments, thoughts, and principles, will move in the line in which God moves, and will therefore have God with him. Thus, *morally*, our power for God's work is derived from special connexion with God. *Without him, we can do nothing in his cause.*

The text leads us to infer—

II. THAT SIN DISSOLVES THIS SPECIAL CONNEXION BETWEEN MAN AND GOD. It was the duty of Samson to wear long hair. This was his vow. This vow he broke, and thus sinned; and sinning, the Spirit of God departed from him, and his strength was gone. *Morally*, sin always separates us from God, and makes us weak. (Isa. lvii. 2.) It weakens us (1) *by destroying our sympathy with God.* Man is powerful when sympathizing with God, but when *guilt* comes on the conscience, that sympathy is gone. (2) *By awakening a dread of God.* "The wicked fleeth when no man pursueth," &c. (3) *By generating an opposition to God.* "Who is the Lord?" &c.

The text leads us to infer—

III. THAT THIS DISSOLUTION MAY OCCUR WHEN THE SUBJECT IS UNCONSCIOUS OF IT. Samson rose from his sleep

as usual, "and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself." He did not know, when he thus spoke, that he had lost his strength, and that the Lord had departed from him. In *morals* this is frequently the case. A man who had once the divine power to battle with a spiritual antagonist, and do great things for truth and souls, *sins*, and loses his energy unawares. The Spirit of the Lord departs from him.

But how is it that he does not discover it at once? First. *Because of the gradual way in which it takes place.* It is not a sudden event: God does not give a man up at once. The mind becomes gradually alienated from God, the source of its power. Some duty is at first omitted, then another, then a general indifference takes place, and then positive sin, &c. Secondly. *Because external circumstances continue* the same. When the inward declension occurs, no outward indication is given. Providence pursues its wonted course: health continues, business prospers, the sun shines as usual, and temporal blessings fall free and full as ever on the path. Were the inner change ever followed by an outward, it would be noticed. Thirdly. *Because the mechanical habits of religion are maintained.* Habits survive the spirit which produced them. After the spirit of religion is gone, its external habits continue. There may be family worship, regular attendance on the house of God, but no soul in anything. There is much of this, manifestly, amongst us.

IV. THAT A PERIOD WILL ARRIVE WHEN THE DISSOLUTION WILL BE PAINFULLY REALIZED. "And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson." Now his giant strength was needed, and now he rose to put it forth, *but it was gone.* And what was the result? "The Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house." In the language of our great poet, let us hearken to the miserable moanings of this fallen man:—

"I was his nursling once, and choice delight,
 His destined from the womb,
 Promised by heavenly message twice descending.
 Under his special eye
 Abstemious I grew up, and thrived amain;
 He led me on to mightiest deeds,
 Above the nerve of mortal arm,
 Against the uncircumcised, our enemies:
 But now hath cast me off as never known,
 And to these cruel enemies,
 Whom I by His appointment had provoked,
 Left me all helpless with the irreparable loss
 Of sight, reserved alive to be repeated
 The subject of their cruelty or scorn.
 Nor am I in the list of them that hope;
 Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless:
 'This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
 No long petition, speedy death,
 The close of all my miseries and the balm."

Even so the time will come when those who have lost the Spirit of God—the true energy of soul—shall realize the loss. In the hour of severe *temptation*—in the hour of *suffering*—in the dark hour of *death*—in the solemn hour of *judgment*, the want of divine *moral* strength will be deeply felt. Its lack will be ruin. Worse enemies than the Philistines await the sinner—enemies that shall do worse than put "out the eyes," bind with "fetters of brass," or force their wretched victims to "grind in the prison house."

Analysis of Homily the Seventy-third.

"Set your affections upon things above."—COL. iii. 2.

SUBJECT:—*The Greatest Things.*

1. THE GREATEST OBJECTS OUT OF MAN. "Things above." The apostle does not mean "above" in a *local* sense—the spiritual rather than the material; but in a *moral* sense.

Truth, rectitude, benevolence, spirituality, religion, are "above;" *error, wrong, selfishness, carnality, impiety,* are "below."

II. THE GREATEST POWER IN MAN. What is it? The moral "affections." There are beings who have affections, but they are not moral—brutes. There may be beings who have intellect, but no affections—sheer *intellectualists*. But we have moral affections—affections for the true, beautiful, and good. These affections are the chief things belonging to us: the intellectual faculties are worthless without them. They are the springs of action—the spirit in every wheel of the human machine—the essence of humanity. As they are, we are: weak or strong, good or bad, dignified or degraded, happy or miserable.

III. THE GREATEST WORK FOR MAN. What is it? To set your affections upon "things above." The importance of this is seen (1) *from the tendency to set your affections upon things below*. The soul is prone to cleave to the dust. This may arise from the following facts:—We are more *palpably* connected with inferior things—more easily connected with inferior things—more easily influenced by inferior things. The importance of this is seen (2) *from the fact that our well-being is essentially dependent upon it*. If we do it not, we are lost men.

This, then, is our great work. The *great* work of man is not to get wealth, power, fame, or even knowledge, but to set his affections upon right objects. Philosophically, everything depends upon this.

Analysis of Homily the Seventy-fourth.

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.”—COL. iii. 17.

SUBJECT:—*Secular Work a Means of Spiritual Training.*

A FACT which must be deeply significant to all who aim at the Christian life, is that by far the greater part of man's life is appointed by God to be spent in worldly toil. It becomes a vital question, then, whether this worldly toil is to be regarded as in itself *adverse* to his spiritual life, or whether it *contribute* to its growth. Secular work is not *necessarily* a spiritual training. Men may, and do, make it a training for the intensest selfishness and the most direful impiety; but it ought to be made the means of our spiritual education, and can be made so on certain conditions.

I. WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS TO MAKE WORK HELP IN THE FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

1. A conviction that the object of man's life is a *spiritual* one. Man must be able to view the main purpose of his life as *one* and not twofold—as having a grand unity which binds together the apparently conflicting wants of it. If there be a sphere of life in which his own will, and not God's, is to be supreme—if his worldly concerns may be pursued as an *end* altogether independently of God's will, and of his spiritual culture—then the work of the six days of the week must be destructive of the work of the other one day, and the great aim of life is degraded into a struggle for wealth, pleasure, and honour. If this be the correct view of life, then, why did God give man a spiritual nature, and endow him with a *conscience*, a *will*, or *powers of affection*, capable of embracing the infinite?

2. A conviction that the claim of Christianity upon our life is universal. The aim of Christianity is not to make man do certain specified things, at certain specified times, and in certain places, and then to have done with him; but rather to produce a certain inward condition of his whole being. Its first claim, therefore, is on the thought and feeling of his nature—the

dominion of every thought and every feeling—and then on the outward act of his life, as the natural embodiment of his heart and will. It thus claims to cover and control the whole province of his nature and existence; so that, whether he be a scholar, a merchant, or a mechanic, he is to carry a soul rectified and governed by the will of Christ into his occupation; and whether he pray or work—whether he be in the church or the shop—he is to be under the control of the same principles and affections.

3. A conviction that labour is not necessarily an *evil*. The multitude is prone to believe that bodily toil is essentially adverse to scriptural culture; that God has doomed us to it as a punishment for sin, and not as a discipline for holiness; that, therefore, it is a sign of the devil's government over us. It is this thought that *unmans* the religion of thousands—makes them fly to solitude as the only sphere congenial to the spirit of piety. We have looked on work only as a necessity for our physical wants: Christianity recognises it as a necessity also for our spiritual nature. Work *may* debase and brutalize, but it *may* be made the instrument of an energetic and a healthy godliness.

II. IN WHAT WAY CAN WORK HELP IN THE FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS CHARACTER?

1. The *habit of exertion* is useful for this end? Mechanical or mental work is an exertion of the mind to overcome some resistance—to conquer some difficulty—to solve some problem. Now, in the business of life, this necessity for effort is constant—required every day and every hour; and we receive from it discipline for patience, perseverance, and victory, by which we thus pass through. Our spiritual education—that is, the discipline of the will, the acquisition of righteous and benevolent principles—demands the highest, most strenuous, and protracted exertion of the human faculties; and the habit of work—earnest, honest work—becomes, therefore, a grand training for the highest work which man has to do. But—

2. Work, especially commerce, affords direct training for

the moral principles. Many who profess Christianity assert that religion and business cannot be followed by the same man, because the temptations of business are stronger than ordinary human character can withstand. But the fact of these temptations ought to have suggested these two very different conclusions:—1st. That God intended them to prove and develop our fidelity to Him—that is, that they are a school for the education of our own character; and, 2ndly, that he who cannot endure and conquer them has little to boast of as a Christian man. The language of such men implies this infidel faith: that honesty and truth in a world governed by God's laws will be beaten in the encounter with fraud and selfishness; a belief which may God avert from prevailing among the Christian men of this land! There is no need to illustrate how constantly and eminently business affords the opportunities of acquiring and deepening within us the principles of truth, justice, and benevolence.

3. Business may become a training for the acquisition of the *highest motive of life*. That highest motive is stated in the passage at the head of this sketch—that whatsoever we do is to be done “in the name of the Lord Jesus”—*i. e.*, his will is to be the ground and reason of our practical life. In the severest toil we endure, we are not to deem ourselves the drudges and slaves of an iron necessity, but the intelligent and free servants of Jesus Christ. We have supposed it impossible to associate the ordinary kinds of manual and mental labour, with the conviction that it is service done to God, if it be rightly done. And yet this is the practical problem that Christianity gives us to solve—to aim at the feeling that we are doing God's will in the common details of our ordinary vocation, as well as in acts more directly religious. Work is not necessarily worship, but it may be made so by the spirit in which we do it. With this high reference in all our toil to God's will, life, in none of its aspects, would be mean and secular, but a lofty and divine training for perfect virtue and holiness.

CHARLES SHORT, M.A.

The Genius of the Gospel.

[Able expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are happily not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remark, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.]

NINTH SECTION.—Matt. v. 13–16.

The Valuable Influence of Embodied Christianity.

THERE are three great facts contained in this passage which claim our most earnest and profound attention:—

I. THAT MAN'S SOCIAL HISTORY IS PRE-EMINENTLY THAT OF INFLUENCE. Christ here refers to a physical fact—the influence of one kind of matter upon another—in order to express the power that man puts forth upon man. Science gives us to understand that the principle of influence pervades every part of the material universe; that the fluttering of an insect's wing sends its vibrations to the remotest orb in the great field of space. Be this as it may, man influences man. “No man liveth unto himself.” Each influences, and is influenced. No one is either above or beneath the modifying touch of this subtle, all-penetrating, and ever-flowing element of power. By it man multiplies his moral self—gives immortality and universality to the ideas that spring from his intellect, and the principles that shape his life. The words that drop from his lips fall as pebbles into the centre of a placid lake, creating a series of undulated and ever-widening circles over the whole expanse. Thus the spirit of past generations throb in us; and down through posterity it shall flow, and be the moral life-blood of the men that are to be.

There are two things which account, in some measure, for this wonderful fact in our history:—First. *The bond of physical relationship.* We have descended from one stock; we are branches of one primal root. The blood of Adam circulates through the veins of all. We are all of *one nature*—members of one organic whole. This relationship gives to the parent an almost absolute power over the mind and character of the child: the one feels that he has a *right* to wield the power, and the other that it is his *duty* and happiness to yield. I can conceive of beings existing together where there is no such a physical bond; who are not produced through any secondary instrumentalities; who have no parent but one, and that is God; between whom and the ETERNAL in the order of relationship, there stands no one;—such beings would, to a great extent, stand distinct from, and independent of, each other. Such is not man. He derives his existence from a line of ancestry which lengthens with every age; a link in the long chain is he, and the motion of all past links moves him. The other thing which serves to account for this fact in our history is, secondly, *the bond of universal inter-dependence.* The principle of mutual dependence is one of the most absolute to which we are subject. No man is independent of another; and, as a rule, those who pride themselves in their imaginary independence are the most dependent. The diversities which exist in *the intellectual powers, mental attainments, secular positions, the ages, and general capabilities* of men, give universal sweep and resistless energy to this principle of inter-dependence. Man is dependent upon man for his education, his support, his protection, his comfort, and his religion. Who does not see that this law necessitates influence? There may be beings living together who are entirely independent of each other. There may be such a perfect equality between their *being* and *circumstances*, that one has no power either to help or injure another. They may derive their blessings *direct* from the fountain, and not through the channel of mutual operation. In such a case, we see not how they *could* influence each

other. Such, however, is not man's case; he is ever *giving* to and *receiving* from his brother; he cannot live without it.

Such conditions may help to explain, and perhaps to impress, the solemn fact, that *man's social history is pre-eminently that of influence*. The other fact contained in this passage is—

II. THAT EMBODIED CHRISTIANITY RENDERS THIS INFLUENCE INCALCULABLY VALUABLE. A power so gigantic as this power of influence—a power which may be said to be the *totality* of all other human powers—cannot but suggest and enforce the question, What must man become in order that his influence may become a blessing rather than a curse to the race? This question our great Instructor virtually answers in the passage before us, when he says “that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” It is the GOOD WORKS that will induce others to “glorify our Father which is in heaven.” But what are good works? Not occasional acts of goodness, but the uniform habits of a life inspired with supreme love to God; they are the natural branches of a soul whose affections are rooted in God and truth; they are the developments of Christ's life—embodied Christianity—the soul of our souls. If we have not these—however accurate our theology, unexceptionable our external conduct, and holy our professions—our character will be but as salt that has “lost its savour,” “thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast down and trodden under foot of men.” It was thus with the Jewish nation, they were an orthodox people, regular in religious observances, and blameless in outward deportment, but they had no *spiritual life*; their salt had “lost its savour”—lost its pungent spiritedness and anti-corrupting power: they had become a nation of insipid and soulless hypocrites, and were fit for nothing but the fate which awaited them, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under the crushing foot of pagan Rome. This embodied Christianity does three things in its influence:—First. *It conserves the good*. “Herein,” says Olshausen, “lies the point of comparison between

the disciples and the salt : it is contained in that power which prevents corruption and imparts life." There is a tendency in animal matter to putrefaction, and the peculiar property of salt is that it counteracts this tendency ; it is a *preservative*. Here is the resemblance. There is a sad disposedness in humanity to degeneracy. Although the human soul has instinctive aspirations and powers to rise—although it is designed and in every way fitted to move upward for ever—it has somehow received a strong bias downward, and external circumstances are ever bearing it in that direction. All history teems with examples of moral declination, and all hearts are conscious of this gravitating force. What is the counteractive? *The Life of Christ in Man*. That life flashes a light upon the corrupt heart of society, and makes it blush. But few will dare to sin in the presence of living holiness. Night cannot retain its empire in the presence of the sun ; vice cowers under the radiant eye of virtue. Had not England been salted to some extent with true Christian influence, what would have been the description of her literature, the character of her laws, and the morals of her people? Verily, unless "the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrah." Secondly. *It reveals the good*. "Ye are the light of the world." A true disciple is a light—an orb reflecting the rays of the Father of lights. There is more of God seen in a good man than the whole material universe can unfold : he is a partaker of the Divine nature ; God shines *in* him and *through* him. Light brings distant things near : scenes far away are brought into immediate contact with the eye, and paint their image on the soul, through light. Even distant stars are brought close home to our hearts through the pale and gentle beams they shed on our path. Even so it is with the character of a *true* disciple : his conversation, his conduct, his spirit, his life, throw such a light upon the moral eye of men as to bring God, duty, and eternity very near. Thirdly. *It propagates the good*. It leads men to "glorify your Father which is in heaven." The language of Christ implies, that if men

really see good works in others, they will be induced to glorify God; and to glorify God is the highest good of man. "It is a good thing to give praise unto God;" it involves all else. In it our powers alone receive their true development, our deepest wants their supply, our highest aspirations their end. Philosophically, man cannot rise in real power and blessedness without the true worship of the true God. The religious nature is the spring and soul of our being, and this must be put right, or all else will be wrong. Now, *embodied Christianity* is the highest appeal to the religious in man: it is the voice of God in its most touching and intelligible accents. There is a *causative* connexion between *seeing* "good works" in others and glorifying God.

III. THAT THIS VALUABLE INFLUENCE OF EMBODIED CHRISTIANITY IS DESTINED TO SPREAD. The passage shows that its diffusion is guaranteed, by three things—*inherent fitness, Divine intention, moral obligation*.

First. *Here is inherent fitness*. It is compared to *salt*. There is a tendency in salt to penetrate the mass into which it is put—to work its way through every particle, and to impart its character to the whole. It is compared to "light." There is a tendency in light to throw its radiance over all the objects within its reach. It is compared to "a city that is set on a hill." There is a tendency in that to attract the attention of the surrounding neighbourhood, and to send its spirit down through all the suburban districts. Even so there is a tendency—a fitness—in embodied Christianity to penetrate the circles in which it lives and moves.

Secondly. *Here is a Divine intention*. "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." Who kindled the lamp of moral goodness in his soul? Who lit up the bright and holy flame in the sin-darkened spirit? HE who of old commanded the light to shine out of darkness. Why did he do it? Not that it might be concealed, but exposed. He gives light to the sun, that it may fling its beams on the

dark orbs that roll far away; and these orbs catch the rays to send them farther on. Even so it is in *morals*: God kindles a new light in a soul, that that soul may give light to all that are in the house—all within the sweep of its influence.

Thirdly. *Here is moral obligation.* “Let your light so shine before men.” Here is a Divine command urging it. In connexion with the natural tendency of embodied Christianity to spread itself, its subject feels *bound*, by the same solemn obligations, to make its diffusion the grand end of being.

This *embodied* Christianity is the great desideratum, but it is, confessedly, a rare thing amongst us. Barren creeds, conventional formalities, and zeal far more denominational than divine, make up, to a great extent, the Christianity of this age. The Christianity the Church is holding out to the world in these days is something like the sham beast that Prometheus is said to have offered to the god of thunder, without flesh or blood—a mere hide stuffed with bones!—dry bones! The *salt* has lost its savour: our religion has become tasteless. It has no pungent spiritedness. To induce people to contribute to the spread of the gospel, missionary platforms often quote the good old aphorism, “Great is the truth, and it will prevail.” But we are only deceiving ourselves, and others too, if we do not realize another aphorism equally true and profound—namely, that *Moral truth can only prevail over moral error by meeting it in its own form.* If the errors of the world existed only in abstract theories and fine speeches, then your truth, by abstract arguments and eloquent harangues, could put it down. But errors are *concrete* things: they are not merely in the brain, on the tongue, or in the folio, but they are in the life—they are *embodied*. Your infidelity, your Paganism, your irreligious and wrong religions, all are *incarnations*; they are realities in men, wrought into the very texture of their experience. If, therefore, your truth is ever to prevail over these errors, *its word must become flesh, and dwell amongst them.* Let “the Church’s mind move in charity, rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of truth,” and then its light shall so shine before men that others will see its “good works, and glorify,” &c.

In Memoriam.

SINCE the publication of our last number the grave has closed upon all that was mortal of that excellent and esteemed minister of Christ, Dr. F. A. Cox. Our readers may have perused, in the public prints, a more or less lengthened account of his life and learning, his labours and latter end; nevertheless, we cannot refrain from dedicating a portion of our pages to the memory of a man who, by the laborious and enlightened exertions of a long-protracted life, has laid the public in general, and the Church of Christ especially, under large and lasting obligations. We are not called upon to be his biographers; neither have we the time, if we possessed the ability, to present our readers with a full-length and laboured portrait. All we can attempt is a very, *very* brief sketch of his Christian, intellectual, and social character.

First. Let us record our hearty admiration of his sincere, ardent, and active piety. He was a "man of God;" "the Spirit of the Lord was upon him." He early became a Christian, and, for more than half a century of years, he was strenuously and successfully engaged in recommending Christianity to others. The religion he professed, preached, and *practised* was no distortion of gospel doctrine, no caricature of Christianity, no produce of mere ecclesiastical party and creed; but it was the religion of the scriptures—the religion of the Redeemer—and, therefore, free as the air, diffusive as the light, and bounded, in the amplitude of its comprehensive benevolence, only by the circumference of the habitable globe. He firmly believed, and faithfully acted up to the conviction, that Christianity ought to display her purity, exert her power, manifest her wisdom, and pour forth her loving, gentle genius, in all the walks of human life: alike in the seminaries of the young, in the mart of the merchant, in the chamber of legislation, in the hall of science, among men of every condition,

colour and clime. Imbued with the spirit of an enlarged and enlightened charity, he had learned how to combine modes of benevolent operation which men of colder and more contracted hearts have deemed essentially discordant; for our departed friend was at once an ardent advocate of Christian union and an unflinching public opponent of all abuses in church and state. He could labour earnestly and long for the diffusion of Christianity abroad, and could spare time for the defence of a free press, for the diffusion of a healthy literature, and the establishment of the great principles of a large and liberal system of education, at home. He was one of "the fathers and founders" of Dissenting newspapers; and while the present generation have to thank him for many valuable contributions to periodical literature, history will honour him as the fellow-labourer of Brougham and Campbell in the great work of founding the London University.

Secondly. A remark or two upon his intellectual character. The mental powers of Dr. Cox were certainly not of the *highest* order. No discerning person would think of putting him on a level, for example, with the great contemporaries of his own section of the Church. He possessed not the massive mind of Andrew Fuller, nor the imperial imagination of Robert Hall; much less the acuteness, the analytical power, and profound originality of John Foster. He was, notwithstanding, a superior man. If his learning was not deep, it was extensive; and if he has not bequeathed to posterity any literary production for "a ceaseless possession," his works certainly enabled him to wear, without a blush of conscious demerit, the academical titles which adorn his name.

Thirdly. As to his *social* qualities. These were, undoubtedly, of unusual excellence. We never but once had the pleasure of meeting him in private, but that once sufficed to prove that he was a truly amiable and genial man. We shall not soon forget the easy, graceful flow of his conversation, the proofs he gave of the possession of abundant and varied information, nor the enthusiastic delight with which he spoke of the great and good men with whom he "had taken sweet counsel," and

by whose side he had been honoured to stand in their manful struggles with the manifold evils of the world. If he was always, or *often*, as we then saw and heard him, we wonder not that an intimate friend should write thus lovingly concerning him:—"It was as impossible to have been once in his company without retaining a lively impression of his amiableness, as it would be to forget the first sights of sunrise at sea, or the first glance from the slopes of Vesuvius over the Bay of Naples. . . . He belonged to that rare grade of moral excellence which only would justify a Christian in adopting the enthusiastic language of a Pagan,—

‘*Tecum vivere amo, tecum obeam lubens.*’”

We conclude our references to the departed with a remark upon three minor, but not entirely unimportant, matters connected with his now completed career:—1st. Dr. Cox was permitted to attain to a good old age. He was born in March, 1783, and survived, therefore, his “three score years and ten.” He became minister of the church at Hackney in 1811, and thus for more than forty years performed the onerous duties of pastor and preacher among one people; and that he laboured successfully is proved by the fact, that his church, from being one of the smallest, became one of the largest in London, or in the land. 2ndly. Though so successful and honoured, he was more than once or twice reminded, by severe domestic trials, that this world was not his rest and reward. Not the least bitter of these trials was the loss of a beloved son, “who gave early promise of sustaining the reputation of the paternal name in the Christian ministry; but it pleased God to take him to Himself soon after commencing his preparatory studies.” 3rdly. We would not be entirely silent concerning the noble form and graceful manners of our departed brother. Dr. Johnson was not less truthful nor more cynical than usual when he said, “Those only despise personal beauty who don’t happen to possess it.” As the world grows older and wiser, it will probably hold in less esteem, than in days of yore, the lofty stature, the majestic gait, and the mighty

strength of the mere *material* man ; but the time will never come when there will not linger among us that respect for physical stature and physical strength which we feel toward towering mountains, lofty buildings, and well-constructed ships. Assuredly, Dr. Cox was none the less estimable in the family, useful in the Church, or respected by his fellow-men ; because, like Turnus,

“ Ipse catervis
Vertitur in mediis, et toto vertice supra est.”

We can easily understand with what readiness, and how appropriately, our *fathers* quoted the striking words of scripture to apply them to our departed friend :—“ He was a choice young man and a goodly ; there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he.”

But he is now, with all his endowments—physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual—removed far from us, and all that remains for us to do, in reference to him, is to cherish his memory, in order to be stimulated to emulate his pious deeds. We sincerely sympathise with his bereaved family, his church, and the denomination to which he deemed it his happiness and honour to belong ; and he had reason to be proud of it, for—numbering, as it does, among its great ones, the immortal names of Bunyan and Howard, Carey and Fuller, Hall and Foster—it is far from least among “ the thousands of Israel.” Others, we are sure, will be raised up, and step forth to be “ baptized, for the dead ;” men, who, like their sires, will be “ standard-bearers” in the army of the Church, and valiant combatants of Truth and Christ and God.

J. H.

LITERARY NOTICES.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE RESTORATION OF BELIEF. Cambridge: Macmillan and Co.

THIS work is a series of Tracts on Christian evidence. The two numbers that have appeared are now before us, and we have carefully perused them. With the first we were a little disappointed. Though, from the beginning, we felt ourselves in company with a *mind* worth meeting—athletic, well-schooled, deeply read, teeming with great ideas struggling for development; a mind with “eagle eye and wing”—we, nevertheless, felt impatient at the trouble and time expended on what may be called the mere *scaffolding*. We wanted at once to see the plan of the building, and then watch the superstructure rising, stone by stone, with all the expertness possible. This is perhaps our fault, arising from an intellectual *impetuosity*, of which our mother was wont to complain. Number two has, however, satisfied us that, in this “Restoration of Belief,” we have met with “an INTERPRETER, one amongst a thousand.” It is a magnificent argument for *historical Christianity*. We scarcely know which most to admire—the originality of scheme, the resistlessness of logic, the beauty of expression, or the thorough honesty and candour of spirit. Bacon, paraphrasing the language of Lucretius, has said, “It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof, below; but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage-ground of truth—a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene—and to see the errors and wanderings, and mists and tempests, in the vale below.” This book makes us feel that we are on the vantage-ground, and that the air, indeed, is clear and calm.

THE PENTATEUCH AND ITS ASSAILANTS: a Refutation of the Modern Objections of Scepticism to the Pentateuch. By WILLIAM HAMILTON, D.D. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

FROM the days of Julian—of whom even Gibbon says, that the Christians had “much more to fear from his power than from his arguments”—

to this hour there have continued to arise those who have assailed the Bible, and that with no small amount of intellect and learning. They have drawn their objections from almost every department of human investigation. Chronology, astronomy, ethnology, and geology are armouries which they have assiduously searched for weapons, whereby to crush "the faith once delivered to the saints." But what has been the issue? Each infidel aggressor, as he has appeared, has always met with more than his master; he has been driven back discomfited, with his weapons shivered by sound philosophy and true logic. The book before us is a defence of the Pentateuch against the attacks of modern assailants—assailants in the dignified garb of metaphysics, criticism, and scientific inquiry. We sincerely regard the work as equal to most of its class, and decidedly superior to many. It is an interesting and vigorous condensation of the whole argument. We know of no *one* book that can supply its place: it does the work of many, and does it well.

THE AMERICAN PULPIT. Sermons by the most Eminent American Ministers. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

HERE are fourteen sermons, most of them preached by our transatlantic brethren, and a few, indeed, of world-wide fame. All are good. Some, in some things, are better than others; but they have certainly more commonplace formulæ, and less quickening suggestiveness, than we expected to find in the pulpit of a people so young, healthful, and progressive.

THE DRYING-UP OF THE EUPHRATES; or, the Downfall of Turkey Prophetically Considered. By JOHN AITON, D.D. London: Arthur Hall, Virtue, and Co.

THE author of this pamphlet is a great admirer of the "Apocalyptic Sketches," and writes eloquently about the "beasts," the "horns," the "ram," the "goat," and the other mystic symbols of unfulfilled prophecy. The visions of "Ulai," "Chebar," and "Patmos" are all clear to *him*. He is one of those, it seems, to whom it is given to "know the times and seasons."

HOMILETICS; or, the Theory of Preaching. By A. VINET, Professor of Theology at Lausanne. Translated from the French. Edinburgh : T. and T. Clark. London : Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

THIS work is by no common man. One leading literary authority has pronounced Professor Vinet to be "the first of modern French theologians," and D'Aubigné has entitled him "the Chalmers of Switzerland." Such a man ought to produce a good book, and this *is* one. Though the contents of the volume are chiefly lectures, delivered by a theological professor to students of divinity and candidates for the Christian ministry, they are capable of yielding much pleasure and large profit to all classes of thoughtful Christians. Here ministers may gather many valuable hints to assist them in the prosecution of that most arduous, important, and responsible of all labours—the composition of an earnest, eloquent, and evangelical sermon; here the private Christian may clearly see, and devoutly admire, that close and complete union into which real religion brings the intellect and hearts of all her disciples, whatever may be the language they speak, and whatever the country in which they dwell; and here, also, the literary student will find numerous specimens of the sweetest and noblest eloquence which the ancient and modern tongues can supply. We think no wise person will regret the money he expends upon this volume; and if the deacons and elders of our churches will present their minister with a copy of it, they will certainly perform "a good deed;" they will supply *seed-corn* to the spiritual husbandman, and thus be the means of casting "bread upon the water, which will be seen after many days."

LUCY MANEHAM: a Narrative Illustrating the Importance of Seeking the Lord while He may be Found. By ALBERT FOYSTEY. London : Benjamin Green, Paternoster Row.

THIS little tract reminds us of the "Dairyman's Daughter," written in the same style, for the same end, and breathing the same spirit. It is worthy of circulation.

FACTS AND FANCIES OF MEN, WOMEN, AND PEOPLES. By FREDERIC ROWLAND YOUNG. London : Simpkin, Marshall, and Co.

WE believe in small books. A man who is charged with earnest, well-defined ideas, the offspring of his own soul, has neither the heart nor

time for book-making. The less the letterpress, the better for him. The true thinker can say in a few pages more than the mere vendor could say in volumes. This is a small book, and it is brimful of thoughts. Some of these thoughts are not worth much; a few we reprobate; but, for the most part, they are of a high order—fresh, vigorous, and suggestive.

BETHANY; or, Christ in the Family. By JOHN BAKER, Chorley.
London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

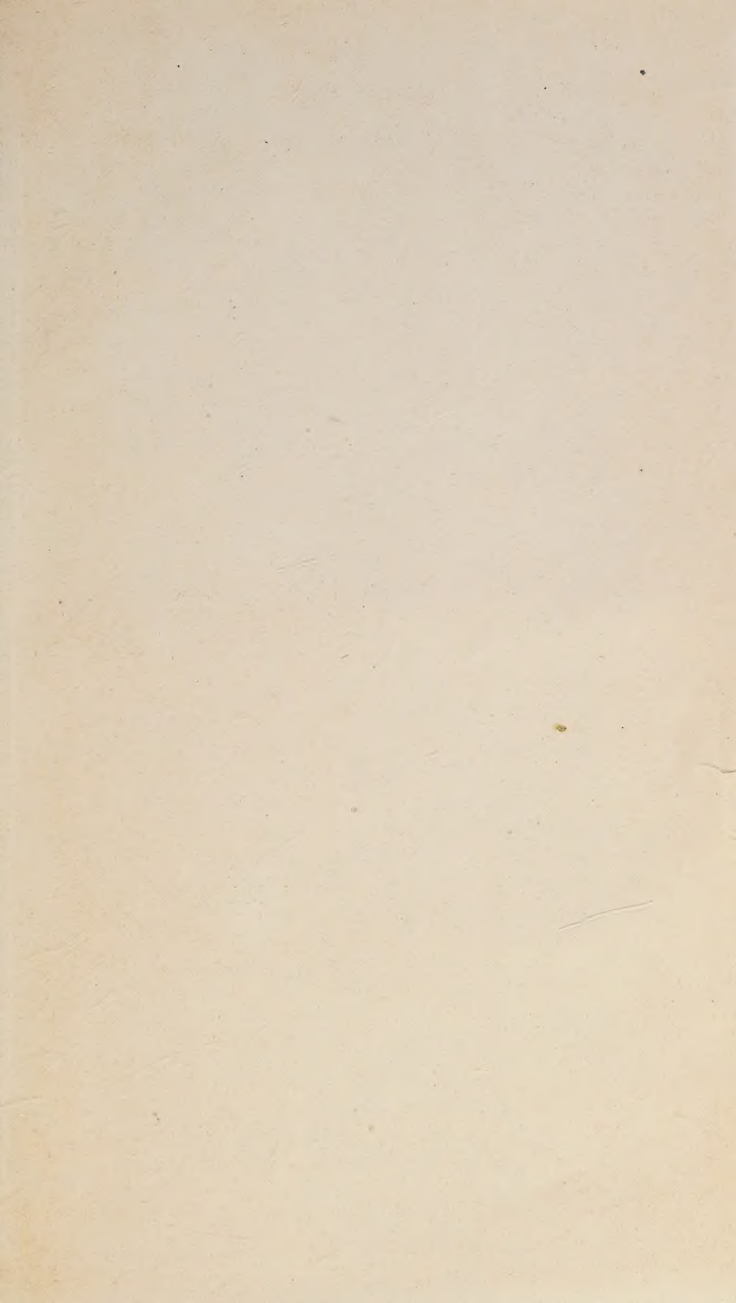
THIS is another book which has the rare virtue of being small in compass, but big in meaning. Though it pretends to nothing either original or profound, it has a great deal of fresh and pious thinking, always expressed with remarkable clearness, and sometimes with great beauty and force. The pious reader will be greatly pleased and refreshed by its perusal.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL TENDENCIES OF THE AGE; being Four Lectures delivered at Edinburgh and Glasgow. By J. D. MORELL, A.M.
London: R. Theobald, Paternoster Row.

It is no dishonour to a writer that all his readers do not follow him. Some are too weak in the limb to scale the rugged heights, "some are afraid of that which is high," and some are so contented in the little mental nooks beneath, that they refuse to make the effort, and often charge the adventurer with presumption and folly. The severest charges of heresy generally proceed from the infirm, the nervous, or the lazy. The great teachers of every age have been called heretics. Although we cannot agree with all the theological statements, nor even with some of the philosophical doctrines, of Mr. Morell, it would be an arrogant assumption of infallibility in us to pronounce him heretic. Modesty would suggest that we have not reached his mental altitude, and therefore cannot see so clearly and broadly as he.

The work consists of four lectures. The first is on POSITIVISM, in which the writer shows that the final ground of certitude is not the *testimony of the senses*. The second is on INDIVIDUALISM, in which it is shown that the final ground of certitude is not the conclusions of the *individual reason*. The third is on TRADITIONALISM, in which the writer seeks to prove that the ultimate test of truth is not in any objective

tradition ; and the fourth is on the principle of COMMON SENSE. *His doctrine is, that the primary foundation of certitude in human knowledge is in the common consciousness of mankind.* This is a most instructive and beautifully-written book. The genius of a profound and devout philosophy pulsates through every page. Works of the class before us—strictly philosophical works, in which the first principles of knowledge are discussed—are of primary importance to ministers. The vapid dogmatisms, incoherent declamations, sentimental effusions, and narrow and arbitrary schemes of thought, which impair pulpit efficiency, would be effectually cured by cultivating an acquaintance with the primary laws of thought, and a devout love for metaphysical studies.



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